

BANDWAGON

**THE JOURNAL OF THE CIRCUS
HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.**

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Fred D. Pfening III, Managing Editor

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This unusual poster was used by Fred Buchanan's Yankee Robinson Circus around 1910. It was printed by the Erie Litho Co. Pfening Archives.

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THE BACK COVER

This 1924 Sparks Circus courier has all the typical Roland Butler touches. Butler started with Sparks and later joined Ringling-Barnum. Pfening Archives.

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I certify the statements made by me above are correct and complete. (Signed) Fred D. Pfening, Jr, publisher. (10-1-06)

Fred Logan's Own Story

As told to Richard Mong

I was born in Brandon, Manitoba on October 14, 1925. I went to school in Saskatoon, Moose Jaw and to Notre Dame College in Wilcox, Saskatchewan. There I played hockey, lacrosse and baseball. I'm a New York Yankee fan. My coach and mentor was Father Murray, a trainer of athletes. Wilcox was the home of Nick and Don Metz, who went on to play for the Toronto Maple Leafs in the National Hockey League.

My dad died in 1935 when I was ten years old. After that I lived with my mother and my sister, Ileene. I also shifted around from Uncle to

Uncle as well as boarding houses and such. Finally I got a job out at the fair, the Saskatoon Exhibition, which was a very big fair.

I went to work in a hamburger and hot dog joint. Conklin had it at the time. I remember seeing both Johnny J. Jones and Royal American play there when I was a child. Royal American Shows was the big one in those days. I mean it was huge. My dad used to take me out to watch them unload on a Sunday night. The Carl Sedimayr family owned it and they hired the Saskatoon Cartage Company to pull the wagons from the train onto the lot.

Anyway, I tried to run away with the Conklin Show when I was about seventeen years old.

Father Murray and my mother got me and took me back to Saskatoon. At that time Saskatchewan, Canada didn't have any paved roads. They were all gravel. It was a long, quiet ride, bumpy with the ping of stones hitting the steel fenders of the car.

Fred Logan was on the cover of the 1963, 1964 and 1965 Kelly-Miller Circus programs. Author's collection.

Later, after a lot of talking, I convinced my mother to let me



Fred Logan on Beatty-Cole in 1974. Pfening Archives.

rejoin the carnival. Hitch hiking, I caught up with the Conklin Show in Regina, Saskatchewan and got my old job back. From Regina we moved to Fort Francis, Ontario. There the midway was sort of stripped of food joints so I was out of a job. I saw the banner sign TERRELL JACOBS CIRCUS and Terrell said, "Come on in." So I went to work for Terrell. We toured and when the show closed in Toronto I went to work on the Canada Steamship Lines. I liked the work. It was a coal freighter. Funny how things work out. The ships conveyor broke and I was out of work again. Shortly I saw an ad in the newspaper for the Hamid-Morton Circus to play at the Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto. I went up there looking for work and I discovered that Dolly Jacobs was a featured act. She was working the ground group and Terrell, her husband, was her back up. Bill Woodcock was there also. He worked three elephants, Modoc, Empress, and Judy. Terrell was familiar with how I worked and



PROGRAM & COLORING BOOK



Logan on top of a Jacobs cage helping to return an escaped lion to its cage on Gilbert Bros. Circus. Fred Pfening photo.

when the show closed he said, "Would you like to go with me to the United States?" I said yes.

The first elephant I ever rode was Modoc. I rode her all the way from the Gardens to the train. At that time Terrell was traveling by baggage car. He put me into a shifting box. It was way down at the end of the train car where the inspectors wouldn't walk by those tigers to check the cargo. We got over to the United States and I let myself out. The box I was traveling in was double decked and had a door you could raise at each end.

It normally was used for a lion or tiger. Then I hitch hiked out to Peru, Indiana where Terrell wintered.

I made a lot of dates with Terrell. In those days his big dates were Minneapolis and Saint Paul. Minneapolis was for Edna Curtis and Noel Van Tillburg. Saint Paul was for Orrin Davenport. Clyde Beatty had the cage act in Detroit. Terrell had a big date in Michigan too. I think it was Lansing.

We played the Chicago Stadium There I went to work for Harry Haag. He had two elephants, Alice and Judy. He was going to Winnipeg to play a date for Orrin Davenport. I said, "I'm not going back to Canada. I might not get back into the States!" In those days crossing the boarder was a lot easier to smuggle in and out, but I didn't want to take a chance.

In 1943 I jumped around a little bit. I went with Terrell to Gilbert Bros. When the show played Elizabeth, New Jersey some of the cats escaped but we rounded them up

and returned them to their cages.

It didn't stay out very long, only about five or six weeks. Frank Wirth owned it. Terrell was there with three elephants and the cage act. Zoppe-Zavatta riding act was there as was Art Eldridge with Weir's elephants. It was a big show in a theatre set up. That is the acts

all performed at one end of the tent which was flat.

After Gilbert Bros closed we went with the World of Mirth carnival. Max Linderman owned it. At that time Terrell and Dolly weren't getting along and it seemed to me that I should depart. I talked to Terrell about striking out on my own. He didn't try to hold me. He said, "Go ahead if you want to go." Terrell always treated me good. I learned a lot from him.

So at the tail end of 1943 I was with Endy Bros. and Perell's Worlds Fair Shows. We went all the way to Key West, Florida. It was a carnival show and I sold tickets on the motor-drome show and upped and downed it. I could almost do it now blindfolded, and that's a long time ago.

We got to Key West, which at that time didn't amount to much. Anyway, coming out of Key West we were stopped by the highway patrol. I didn't have any social security card or driver's license or any identification whatsoever. No matter. They let me go. I went on to Sarasota and the Ringling winter quarters. There I went to work for Alfred Court, who I learned a lot from. He had three cage acts on the Ringling Show. He was in the big Ringling fire in Hartford, Connecticut in 1944.

I finished out 1943 and early 1944 working for Cole Bros. Circus, just in the winter time. I got my first social security card there. I worked for Arky Scott. He was a good elephant man. Very good. I learned a lot from him. He treated me like a son. In those days the pay wasn't much but the cookhouse was good. I think I got three dollars a week.

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt announced about that time that all aliens were subject to the



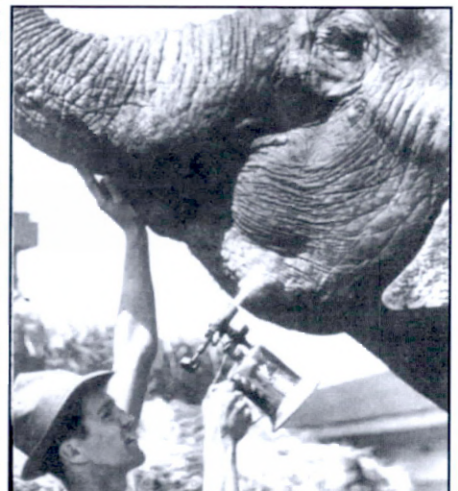
Seaman Fred Logan, U. S. Navy 1944-1945. Author's collection.

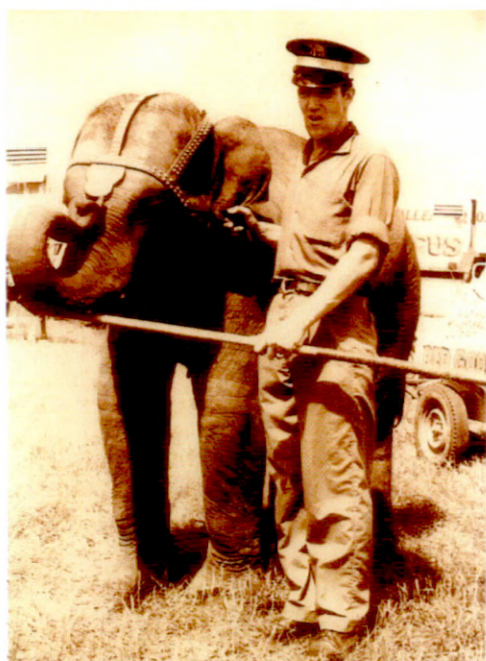
military draft and by serving they would get U.S.A. citizenship. So in 1944 I enlisted in the Navy. They even gave me a thirty day leave before I shipped over seas. I used it to return to Canada and see my family and Father Murray, all of whom I had missed very much.

I served two years in the South Pacific. I was an armed guard on three different ships, a tanker and two liberty ships. We were responsible for protecting these merchant ships. We went through the Panama Canal twice. In fact I went swimming in the Panama Canal.

On our way across the Pacific Ocean we stopped at Anna Atoll. The people there gave us a case of warm beer. We drank it hot too. It's a happy

Logan shaving a Ringling-Barnum elephant. Author's collection.





Fred Logan on Al G. Kelly & Miller Bros. in the early 1950s. Author's collection.

memory. Our destination was New Guinea. We were part of a convoy of thirty or forty ships plus the coast guard. The only time I really saw the Japs was when they were trying to bomb the oil refineries in New Guinea. They flew in real low, right over our ships. I could see the pilot's faces clearly. Our Ensign wouldn't let us fire on them. I'm glad he didn't or I might not be here today.

After my discharge at Jacksonville I returned to Sarasota and Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. From 1946 through 1948 I worked in the elephant department. While there I worked a five group in their Changing of the Guard number. I will always consider it the finest presentation of elephants in circus history.

That winter a friend of mine who with me was on elephants, Richard Durant, married a girl in Saint Marks, Ontario. I went to their wedding then tug boat-ed all the way from Saint Marks to New Orleans. We moved bulk gasoline and oil. When that job played out I worked on a fishing boat. We caught snapper and grouper. There was no refrigeration. We used crushed ice to keep the fish. When the ice ran

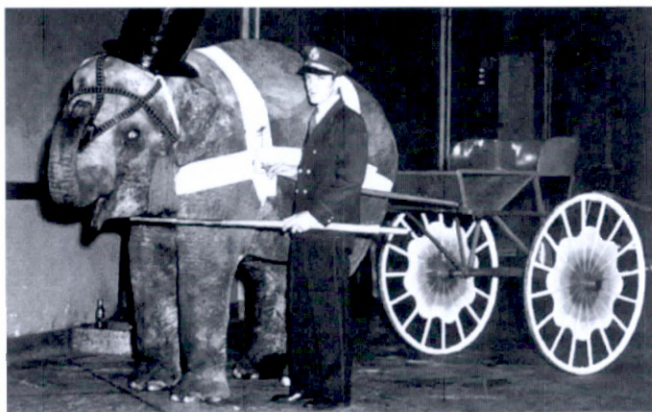
out or when we were weathered out we came back in. I usually earned about enough money for a couple nights out on the town then I was broke. So I got back in the circus business.

In 1949 I toured with Biller Bros. Circus. I was the number two canvas man responsible for putting up and taking down the big top and all of the smaller tents. Biller had three elephants, some horses and some ponies. We played medium sized towns and had a pretty good season.

In 1950 I went with Dory Miller and his Al G. Kelly and Miller Bros Circus. I was twenty five years old and ready to settle in to a good job. We had a good relationship and I was with him for the next twenty years. Bill Woodcock was the elephant superintendent at that time and that winter I helped him break eleven Asian elephants. I learned a lot from Bill Woodcock and he knew a lot about elephants. We got the job done and then he and D. R. framed the Miller-Woodcock performing baby elephants. Woodcock took that act on the road and played dates. That meant in 1951 I took over the eleven elephants on D. R.'s Al G. Kelly and Miller Bros. Circus.

Dory built Kelly-Miller into a real big show. He had a side show, all those pit shows, a real big menagerie and strong concessions. He made a deal with General Motors Corporation to show our elephants at every

Logan and elephant Barbara at the Minneapolis Shrine Circus in 1952. Buckles Woodcock collection.



Ora Jo and Fred Logan on Kelly-Miller around 1954. Author's collection.

Chevrolet dealership in every town we played. He had a concert wild west show, a cage act, liberty horses, ponies and a big hippo that Camel Dutch walked clear around the track. John Narfski's nickname was Camel Dutch. He was in charge of the menagerie. Alfonso Loyal did the bare back stuff. You know, rolling in front of the horse, stuff like that. He was a good friend of mine too. Yeah, D. R. had a good show, a big show, and he treated me very well.

In 1970 I left Dory in good standing when Willie Story called me to take over the elephants on Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros Circus. Rex Williams had departed. I wouldn't have even considered this move, except for the fact that Rex wasn't there anymore. I had eleven Asian elephants there too. Four were tough ones, Pete, Bea, Jib, and Freida. Freida was real tough. She is still alive. Pete's dead. Bea and Jib are in Mexico. Bea was a tough elephant. She wouldn't eat you but you had to watch her. Jib was a soft shell. She loved little kids. She'd never hurt a child but she would hit a stranger. Anyway, it was a good job and I was there for twenty-eight years.



Fred and Ora Jo with the five act on Beatty-Cole in 1977. Pfening Archives.

Walter, my son who just died, handled a three group in ring one. Alan Kinsey, a good elephant man, presented a three group in ring three. Ora Jo and I were in the center ring with a five group. We finished the act with an eleven elephant moving long mount along the track.

Alan was with me twenty two years. Right now he's with my-son-in-law's circus, Circus Pages. He helped me break three baby elephants that Frank McClosky bought.

The Beatty Cole organization owned three circuses: Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros., King Bros and Sells and Gray. I didn't get the biggest salary in the world but they treated me real good. McClosky was running things. Walter Kernan was already dead. McClosky owned a big Mansion over in Winter Park. I took a baby elephant over there for a party one time. He gave me a one hundred dollar bill. He sure treated me good. Anyway, John Frazier brought in Brad Jewell to replace me as elephant boss. I was almost seventy years old and it was time for me to step back. After one season Frazier replaced Jewell with Adam Hill. I stayed on for another year so that Adam could get certified. Then I left the show.

Things are different now. Johnny Pugh paid off the Clyde Beatty title and now calls the show NEW COLE BROS. The only animals in the show are house cats. Dickie Garden has leased the Clyde Beatty name and framed a building show. I hear that he's doing real good.

When I finally left the Beatty Show, I'll always call it that, Walter and I went to George Carden. Walter worked the elephants and I watched a pregnant elephant. We were there for one season. Walter and I then went with my son-in-law's show, Circus Pages, a family show for family people. It's a good show. They play in buildings and at fairs. It's a good value and they are always welcome to repeat the next season. We were there for one season.

Pages Circus bought two Africans from Gunther Gebel-Williams, Daisy and Bombi. Let's just say that I helped to negotiate the deal. We went to get them in Venice and trucked them out to Myakka City. My granddaughter, Vinceta, is working five white tigers. My daughter, Frieda works the camels and helps her husband, Jorge, work Daisy and Bombi. They also have a nice horse act that two of my granddaughters do.

Next, I put in a season with Ray and Netta McMahon's Royal American Circus. Likely the best paying job that I ever had. I took care of the petting zoo. We played fairs and I really enjoyed that season. It was my last season on the road and a great way to finish up.

I finally decided to retire and then hung out with my daughter, Mary Jo Zerbini, in Myakka City. One day Nellie Hanneford came by and said her dad would like me to come to Nokomis and watch their winter quarters and motel. It sounded good to me, so here I am. I've been here about three years now. Tommy and I were friends for about forty years. We worked a lot of dates together.

Struppi took over after Tommy died. She treats me very well. I live here with my daughter, Omi and my granddaughter, Connie. I like the job, the place and the people and I'm very happy here. I wish Ora could be here to enjoy it with me. She has been dead almost ten years already. Before she died she became very religious in the Jehovah Witness faith. That's good.

You know fifty years ago, when Tommy bought this place, there wasn't anything out here. Fruitville Road was just two lanes. I don't know why Ringling ever got rid of that big winter quarters. Boy, there was nothing like it. What a place! They had railroad yards for that whole train. They had a wagon shop. They had everything. They even built their own tents there.

Pedro [Reis] and Dolly [Jacobs] have their Circus Sarasota at the fair grounds and the old site is east of there near Boniva Street. Now you wouldn't even know it was ever there, it's all condos. When I worked there in the late forties I got thirty five dollars a week. I was single then and they had a good cookhouse. I did alright.

I've had my act in several foreign countries in my career. I went to Puerto Rico with the Beatty elephants. I went to Cuba to perform with Dory Miller's elephants. I went to Mexico for Ian Garden. We played Guadalajara, Mexico City, San Louis Potosi, Monterrey, Ontoes Calenti and Leone. It was a big show and I worked a liberty group of two camels, two zebras, two llamas, and two horses. Ian, who is a good breaker, broke them and I did the act. Ian is a good friend of mine and paid me very well. When we returned home he even gave me a bonus.

I had been to Cuba in 1959 for a winter tour with Gaby, Fofu & Milike Grand Circo Nacional. Dory sent me there with five punks, Mary, Shirley, Minnie, Ione and Virginia.

Some time in the eighties I took the Beatty elephants to do the half time show at the Super Bowl in Miami. Florida. I was almost late. The mechanic put too much air in the tires and when they heated up two blew out. Well, we rectified the situation and finally got there, barely in the nick of time. My granddaughter

was in the act with me and it went over real well with the crowd but not with the coaches. They didn't like the idea of elephants on the football field. I think I made a parade there too. In fact I know I did. I've also taken my elephants to the Cotton Bowl a time or two. Gil Gray made that happen.

Gil Gray married Dolly Jacobs after she and Terrell got divorced. Terrell then married Jean Jacobs, a Chicago newspaper reporter. Terrell and Dolly had two children, Punch and Judy. Then Jean had two sons, Gopher and Termite Davenport.

Both of them have circuses. In fact I think they ended up with some of the Beatty elephants when Beatty eliminated elephants.

In 1945, Dolly had a cage act for Big Bob Stevens' Bailey Bros. Circus. Bob was a friend of mine. His brother Sid had a wagon on Al G. Kelly-Miller Bros when I was there. They had another brother, Little Bob, who had his own circus, Stevens Bros. It was never very successful. I don't know why. It seems in the circus business you're either real successful or you fail. There is not much middle ground.

In 1961, when I had the elephants on Kelly-Miller, I got the idea that I wanted to put together a fighting lion act. I'd been around Terrell and Alfred Court you know, and I couldn't get the idea out of my mind. I talked to Dory about it and he said he'd think about it a little bit. Along about the first of the week he said, "Fred you're going Thousand Oaks to get your lions." Mable Stark had her animal farm out there at that time. Pat Anthony was there and John Strong had a place across the street. I took Oakie Carr out with me. We picked out two females and five males. They were all young and not broken at all. One of the females had rickets when I got her and I could only use her as a seat warmer in my act. Eventually she died. Pretty soon after that I had to take the other female out because the males were always fighting over her and that caused too much heat in the cage. So I ended up with five good sized black maned, male lions. They were all good performers. My act was patterned after Terrell's, only not as spectacular. At one time he had fifty two animals in the arena at once. That's a record and I'm positive of it.



Logan in the steel arena on Kelly-Miller. Pfening Archives.

He told me that himself. I used to ride around with him in Peru and I watched him work a lot too. He was a great lion man and I really learned a lot from him. If it weren't for Terrell I probably wouldn't have been in this business. He didn't sugar break the animals like some trainers did. He used the collar and chain method and I did too. I never saw him abuse an animal and neither did I.

I really think that my career got started when my dad took me out to watch all those railroad shows unload. I remember of seeing Conklin and Garrett in Moose Jaw. I saw the Goodman Wonder Shows and just barely remember the Johnny J.

Fred and his first wife Shirley.



Jones Show. You know the Beatty show's winter quarters in Deland used to belong to the Jones show. I designed the elephant barn out of the old grandstand. We kept our own elephants there and we also had the Ringling elephants which were later moved to Williston, Florida. Ted Svertesky and Gary Thomas used to work for me there when they were young and crazy. Ted got killed in the Ringling train wreck and I don't know exactly where Gary is now. He called me awhile back looking for a job and I told him to call Barbara Miller Byrd. Maybe he's there.

Anyway, back to my cage act. My best lion was Figaro. He was cross eyed and a door bouncer. That was before I was well experienced. I use to stretch him out on pedestals on the side of the arena. At that time I had the cage guyed out with blocks and poles. I'd grab one of the empty pedestals and throw it towards him. He'd roar, jump off of those stretch pedestals and come at me. He'd come right up on the door just I ducked into the safety cage. I'd blank him and he'd jump down and I'd return to the steel arena. It was the best part of my act. I didn't do the stare down. I wasn't into that yet but that escape trick worked real well. Once I forgot and left the door open, right in front of Mrs. Miller. You know that son of a gun stopped. He never came out. He was that smart. You never know.

I had one good sit up lion. His name was George. His signal to sit up was for me to cross my whip handle over my prop pole. If I'd have known more then I could have made them all sit up but George took to it naturally. One time in Pittsburgh I broke my ankle and couldn't work the act. Dory got young John Cline to work the act. I stayed outside the cage, close by, to help him along. He did ok but one night in Oil City he forgot George's cue and I reminded him by crossing my crutches. The show must go on.

Male lions are not graceful like tigers are and they wear out quicker too. My son in law, Jorge Pages, has a beautiful big male lion that he just retired last fall. He was good. He played dead. He wasn't broke to do it. He did it on his own. He'd flop down on his side and just lay there. Jorge

would wind him up by his tail. The audience would say please and all that stuff. It was a great part of the act. My granddaughter, Vincenta, is working five white tigers in Pages cage act now. She's just a teenager and I'm very proud of her.

As far as any other animal acts go: I had a chimp act when I was in Cuba. She was a little tough, but she didn't get tough with me. A guy by the name of Tom Twist broke her. She did perch and all of that stuff. She was a good chimp. I never did a horse act but I did work a pony drill for Dory a little bit and I helped Camel Dutch with his bears some. I also helped John Welde break his cub bears. It was all good experience. When I was in Puerto Rico working for Jimmy Harrington they sent me three baby elephants to break. They came in crates in a cargo plane. The pilot told me that he flew the plane with one hand and fed those baby elephants with the other. I don't know if it is true but it makes a good story.

I never really knew Clyde Beatty, but Red Hartman was a good friend of mine. Red was a gun boy for Clyde, lived in his dressing room, and took over the act when Clyde got sick and died. He helped me when I was working the lions for Dory. He gave me some blank cartridges and taught me how to reload them. Red gave me one of Clyde's prop chairs too. He was a good lion man and had the inside track to take over Clyde's act. But he didn't play his cards right and Dave Hoover got the job. Dave was the star of the Beatty show and I was right there with him for a long time. We only ever had one beef, something about me parking the elephant truck too close to the lions. It never happened again and we were really good friends. I was sorry to hear that he died. The night before last Orni and I drove to Deland to pay our respects. Dave was laid out wearing his starched white arena outfit. His gun and whip were in the coffin. It looked beautiful. There were a lot of important people there as well as a lot of Dave's old friends, all paying their respects. The place was packed.

My first wife was Shirley Linderman. Her family owned the Seils-Sterling Circus, one of the biggest truck shows of the 1920's and



Logan's granddaughter Vincenta Pages and a white tiger. Author's collection.

30's. At the time we were with D.R.'s show. She worked the elephants with me and also did an aerial act with Elan Tole. Maurice Marmalejo taught her the tricks and she did real well. We were married seven years, no children. She was a good woman but things just didn't work out and we were divorced. Shirley then married Red Bentley, Tommy Bentley's brother. I think they had four children and now live in Sheboygan, Wisconsin.

Ora Jo and I lived together for quite a while before we got married. We were both with Al G. Kelly and Miller Bros. You see, Ora's dad was an Indian, Chief Joe Yellow Eyes. He worked in the concert, bow and arrow. He wore a magnificent war bonnet with white eagle feathers on it. There was another Indian chief there too, Clarence Keys. He was half Indian and had blue eyes. He lived in Fort Towsen and is dead now. Before they joined Kelly-Miller they were with Dailey Bros. Five Ring Circus. It was a railroad show owned by Ben Davenport. That's where Ora met Smoky Jones. That didn't last long but they had one child, my oldest daughter, Mary Jo.

Ora Jo was a full-blooded Choctaw Indian born and raised in Watonga, Oklahoma. That's just down the road from Kingfisher. Dick Clemens used to winter there. He had a cage act too and is a good friend of mine. After he got out of the act he was the superin-

tendent of the fairgrounds there. Then he had a slaughter house to supply cage acts with meat like Lancelot Ramos does now.

Ora worked with me in the elephant act and we raised eight children together. I'm very proud of all of them. Mary Jo Zerbini lives up in Sarasota. Eileen is the manager of a bank in Las Vegas, Nevada. Lillian married Jim Havershorm, the former band leader of the Beatty show. She takes care of a condo and apartment complex over in Kissimmee. Freida married Jorge Pages. They have their own circus. Naomi works at a Publix super market just up the road. Chuck lives in Houston, Texas and works as a pipe fitter and welder. Fred Jr. is an Indian agent in Hugo, Oklahoma. Walter, who just died, worked on elephants with me for years then got out of show business. He moved to Deland and drove a fuel truck. We also lost a boy in childbirth. All in all we had a wonderful life together. We were family people.

The Hannefords have a pretty big operation here. They have five big round tops, do a lot of arena shows and have a lot of tractors, trailers, and equipment which they take very good care of. I live here with Omi and my granddaughter, Connie, in a big trailer that I got from Papa Pages. It's close to Omi's work and she likes it here too. She just bought herself a new carry all SUV or whatever. My granddaughter goes to a good school right here in Nokomis. Besides that she studies ballet three days a week on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday after school. Renata Gaona is her teacher. Last Saturday she started trapeze school. Tito Gaona has a flying act school down in Venice at the old Ringling winter quarters. She hasn't gone all the way across yet, but she will. She'll be down there about all day this Saturday. I told her to take her lunch with her.

Well, that's about it. It's been a good life. Thanks to everybody.

Note: The author first met Fred Logan in 1952 when he helped the Al G. Kelly-Miller Bros circus crew set up the big top and collected a free pass for his efforts. In 1961 he took his two year old son to see the circus set up. On that visit Fred invited them to watch him breaking his

seven young lions before the matinee began. They met again in 1963 and again in 1971 and 1976 when Logan was with the Beatty show. Later on they exchanged several letters. Early in February 2006 the author visited with Logan on three different days at the Hanneford winter quarters in Nokomis, Florida. During their time together a video recorded interview was made of the circus great's recollections. The preceding story was compiled from that interview, the letters and their conversations. On July 12, 2006, a scant five months later, Fred C. Logan died of pneumonia and went to God's center ring in the sky.

Buckles Woodcock remembers his friend Fred Logan.

Freddy's early years in the business were interesting. Being Canadian his first job was with the Conklin Shows working for Terrell Jacobs who had a circus on the back end of the midway. My dad was the elephant man working Modoc, Empress and Judy. Right away everyone was impressed by his work ethic and he was promptly smuggled across the border in the elephant

He stayed around Peru for a while but was warned that the immigration people would probably show up, so he was off to see the USA. His next job was with Endy Bros. Shows as a ride hand but the next spring (1943) he joined the Ringling Show. He mentioned that he and Bob Dover joined the same day, Bob was sent to ringstock where he worked as a pony groom while Logan was sent to the

Ora Jo and Fred Logan in 1975. Pfening Archives.



Logan and babies on Beatty-Cole in 1975. Pfening Archives.

he same day, Bob was sent to ringstock where he worked as a pony groom while Logan was sent to the menagerie and worked for John Sabo. His great claim to fame there was moving props around in the Alfred Court display for May Kovar's leopard act.

He said that after breakfast in the cook house he would always look for the hay pile, knowing it was always spotted where the menagerie would be. One day while waiting he noticed three men in suits coming his direction.

They asked him for his I.D. then advised him that if he remained in this country he would be subject to the draft.

Shortly thereafter he found himself in an induction center. All the inductees were ordered to form three lines Line 1 was the Army, Line 2 was the Navy and Line 3 was the Marines. He said he was in the Navy line. After serving as a gunner on a battleship in the Pacific for two years, he returned to the Ringling show.

This time he got a job on elephants, Richard Shipley was in charge. Shipley was sort of a businessman more interested in selling sundry goods, razor blades, loan sharking, etc. than anything else. In fact by 1947 he didn't even work an act, Logan worked the center ring act while Al Vidbel and Vernon

Duffy worked the end rings.

One day that season while un-loading someone came up and told Freddy that a baggage car with some elephants was spotted down by the crossing, they all walked down there and saw Hugo Schmitt, five ele-

phants, a young lady and two great dane dogs. Shipley was told to make room in the menagerie since North had just bought them.

On the lot Hugo's trunk was put in the elephant men's dressing tent and upon hearing that he was a former Nazi several of the hands broke into the trunk and scattered his clothes, and wardrobe around. Needless to say all hell broke loose and Hugo left marks on half the men in the department.

A decision was made to load them all back into the baggage car and send them to Sarasota along with three Ringling elephants Minnie, Dolly and Sudan (the last of the supposed pygmy elephants) from 1936. This would be the feature act for 1948. At the end of the season Hugo would be in charge.

The next season found Freddy as a candy butcher. In 1949 he joined Biller Bros. Circus and in 1950 my dad brought him over to the Kelly-Miller Show where he remained for over 20 years.



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THE OLDEST OF SHOWMEN

The career of Benjamin F. Brown of Somers, New York

By Stuart Thayer

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This monograph is the result of several years research into the early importation of wild animals, the history of the ante-bellum American circus, and biographical inquiry of the men who promulgated the events in this unusual corner of popular culture.

The sources of our information are varied. Initially, they came from reading hundreds of newspapers seeking editorial comment and advertisements. The files of the Somers Historical Society, Somers, New York, gave us an overview of activity and personages in that part of the country. Benjamin Brown's grandson, also named Benjamin Brown (1877-1962), recollected his many conversations with his grandfather, and his own father, Gerard Crane Brown (1842-1899), which he told to one of his daughters. This daughter, Carrie Brown Rorer (1903-1969), collected Benjamin Brown's papers in one very fine group of documents, which were preserved within the family until they rested with Andrew C. Pringle, Jr. of Detroit, and Margaret Pringle Emery of Ann Arbor. In 1998, these descendants donated the collection to the William L Clements Library at the University of Michigan. It was from this group of documents that much of our information was gained.

When he was interviewed by the *New York Sun* in his seventy-ninth year Benjamin Franklin Brown of Somers, New York, was called "The Oldest of Showmen." And in that year, 1879, he may well have been just that. He had participated in more early developments in field exhibitions than any other man of his time. In the years from 1823 to 1825 he traveled with one of the

earliest elephants to reach America; presented shows in the first canvas circus tent to be used in the world; managed the earliest combination of a circus and a menagerie; and traveled up the Nile River to capture giraffes in the Nubian Desert. In addition to these feats, he was the only American known to have lived in the Tower of London.

Brown was born in the right place at the right time and into the right family in order to partake of all these adventures. And the records of his career were preserved by his family, in what may be the largest such record of a pioneer in circus history.

Born in 1799, Brown was one of four sons of Isaac Brown (1772-1842), and Amy Johnson Brown (1775-1844). All four of the Brown brothers were engaged in the traveling show business at one time or another. They were raised in Somers, which the reader will recognize as one of the places in the so-called "Cradle of the American Circus," a name which has been applied to

A sketch of Benjamin Brown done in Cairo during an 1839-40 trip to procure giraffes. Author's collection.



Westchester and Putnam counties in New York.

The area came to notice when a Somers resident, Hachaliah Bailey (1775-1845), was first mentioned in connection with the exhibition of elephants. The now-famous "Old Bet," which was imported in 1804 by the Boston artist Edward Savage, was owned by Bailey at least by 1808, and possibly earlier. The second elephant to reach America, Betty or Bet ("Old Bet" is a later appellation), was shot dead by a farmer in Alfred, Maine on July 16, 1816.

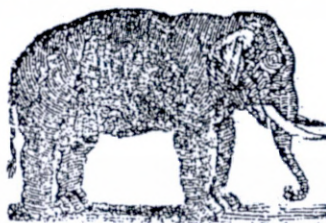
Hachaliah Bailey and George Brunn, who owned Old Bet, wasted no time in arranging for another elephant to be imported. This one, from Calcutta, was also named Betty, and has since been more familiarly known as "Little Bet." She arrived in Boston in December, 1817, the third such animal to be imported. Little Bet was on exhibition for the next eight years, until she too was shot in Chepachet, Rhode Island, on 24 May 1826. Ben Brown traveled with Little Bet in 1823, 1824, and 1825; these were his first years in the exhibition business.

Brown was born in his father's house on the road between Somers and Croton Falls. He lived there until he left home in 1813. He went west and found work in 1814 on river boats plying between Cairo, Illinois and Memphis, Tennessee. Later, he spent some time in Ohio, and then apprenticed himself to a tanner in Beaver, Pennsylvania. When he reached the age of 21, in 1820, he left Beaver, and went to New York City to work in his brother's store. Their father secured a contract to manage a toll-road in Westchester County, and called Ben home to man one of

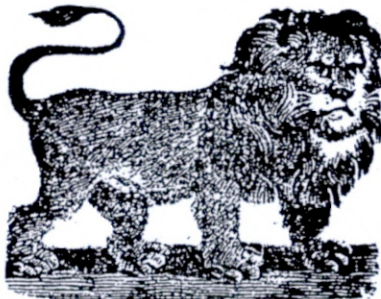
EXHIBITION

OF NATURAL CURIOSITIES.

TO be seen at No. 491 Market street, between Thirteenth and Juniper streets, to remain for two weeks only,



A LIVING FEMALE ELEPHANT,



AN AFRICAN LION, (full grown,) A BUFFALO, just arrived from the Missouri, and a full grown ELK. Admittance 25 cents—Children 12½ cents.

Ad from Philadelphia *Daily Advertiser* for Little Bet and a lion. Ben Brown and his brother, Christopher, exhibited these animals in 1823, 1834 and 1825. Author's collection.

the toll gates. This occupied him until 1823.¹

Hachaliah Bailey did not travel with his elephant exhibitions, though his partners sometimes did. They seem to have hired managers to oversee the daily peregrinations of their exhibits, including the hiring of workmen. Also, they often included other animals in the caravans. For instance, in 1820 two camels accompanied Little Bet on a long journey from New Orleans to Montreal and into Maine and New Hampshire. In 1821 a lion, a buffalo, and an elk could be seen by patrons of the elephant.

In 1823, Edward Finch (1796-1849) managed the show, which consisted of Little Bet and a lion. He in turn hired Ben's brother, Christopher Columbus Brown (1798-1878) to do the traveling, and Christopher hired Ben to help him.

"We used to show in barns," Ben later explained, "and we showed the elephant and lion separate, and charged a shilling for seeing the ele-

phant and a shilling for seeing the lion. That was before the days of tents. My brother Christopher was the first man to put up a canvas. He had it in strips ten feet wide and fifty feet long, and he used to stretch it from the barn doors."

According to Ben the expenses were next to nothing. They didn't average over twenty shillings (\$5.00) a day. He worked for twenty-five dollars a month. "In one season we cleared about \$8,000 with the elephant alone [the equivalent in 2005 of about \$123,000]. We used to have some pretty rough times. We traveled in the night, so the folks wouldn't see the animals, and persons collected in the road some times and tried to stop us. Once, in Pennsylvania, they collected in this way, and one fellow threw a stone and hit me in the head and knocked me off my horse.²

The Brown's sister, Eudocia (1794-1860) wrote a letter in 1825 in which we have a picture of the elephant caravan. On 7 December, the brothers put into Somers to spend Christmas with the family. Eudocia writes that they had the elephant, the lion, and several small animals. In addition, they now had a band of musicians traveling with them. "At all times of the day and night we are saluted with the delightful, the exhilarating (sic) sounds of music from the violin, clarinet, tambourine, cymbal, etc." She further advises that she was given a ride on the elephant, which she found delightful.

The caravan opened in Boston in January, 1826, where it exhibited until March. Ben Brown may not have accompanied it, as he stated that he left Bailey and Finch, in a disagreement over money in 1825. He returned to assist his father with the farm, and in 1826 began his circus career.

Until 1828 menageries and circuses were separate exhibitions, having in common only itinerancy. Circus troupes went from city to city, building temporary buildings or renting theatres in which they would perform from two weeks to six months. Menageries, needing much less space, confined their exhibitions to barns or inn yards, any place in which they could conceal the animals from those unwilling to pay admissions. Brown's adventures with

CIRCUS.

Corner of Washington and Queen Streets.

The performance will commence
This Evening, October 14,
with

A GRAND ENTREE

Of Eight Beautiful Horses, under direction of Mr Brown, Riding Master.

COMIC SONG.

Running Vaulting, or Sports of the Ring,
By the whole Troop. Clown Mr. Lewis

Slack Wire, by Mr Champlin.

HORSEMANSHIP

By Master Sergeant, on two Shetland Ponies, who will jump his whip, hoop, garters, and conclude his performance with a flying leap through a Balloon, the Ponies at full speed.

The Drunken Peasant,

On Stilts Six Feet High, by Master Prosser.

Mr. Brown will introduce the Horse Conqueror.

Horsemanship

By Master Prosser, without Saddle or Bridle.

STILL VAULTING by the whole Company, viz: Champlin, Bancker, Myers, Sergeant, Prosser, Birdsell, &c.—Clown Mr. Lewis.

The whole to conclude with

THE HUNTED TAILOR,

Or Mr. Button's unfortunate journey to Brentford—

Billy Button, Mr Campbell.

Master, Mr. Champlin.

Clown, Mr. Lewis.

*. Doors open at half past six o'clock, and performance to commence at seven. The Pavilion secures Ladies and Gentlemen from the weather, and covered seats afford comfort and convenience.

Admittance—Box, Fifty Cents; Pit, Twenty-five. Children under 12 years, half price. Tickets to be had at Rummell's Lottery Office, and at the Circus.

Brown and Bailey Circus. Ben Brown as ringmaster. Alexandria, Virginia *Phoenix Gazette*, 14 October 1826. Author's collection.

the elephant caravan may be taken as typical.

In 1825 Lewis Bailey (1795-1870), eldest son of Hachaliah, and his partner, Joshua Purdy Brown (ca. 1800-1834) organized a circus that performed in a canvas tent; it was the first such usage in the world. The importance of this adoption lay in the freedom of movement that the pavilion, as it was called, provided. With it the proprietors could visit any place that could promise an audience, and stay as short or long a period as it took to exhaust the local custom. Previous to the use of a tent, the necessity to build circus buildings, temporary structures though they were, dictated long visits in places where large populations guaranteed audiences sizable enough to pay the expenses and provide a profit. This limited the showmen to larger cities.

John Bill Ricketts (d. ca. 1801) who was the first man to present a multi-act circus in America, appeared in Philadelphia and New York in 1793; in Charleston, South Carolina, Norfolk and Richmond, Virginia, Baltimore, and Philadelphia in 1794.

In 1795, his company performed in New York, Boston, Providence, Hartford, Albany, and again in New York. In each of these places he constructed a wooden amphitheatre, or, as in Hartford, used a circle of canvas open to the sky. The duration of these stands was from two weeks to two months, the performances usually given three times a week.³

With their adoption of the canvas tent J. Purdy Brown (the style he preferred) and Lewis Bailey changed this method of operation quite drastically. They also brought about innovation in the logistics and form of circus troupes. Whereas Ricketts and his successors hired performers by the stand, Brown and Bailey hired by the season. When Ricketts moved from city to city he informed those people he wanted to keep where to go, but their wages only started when the company opened in the new location. Brown and Bailey carried their performers with them, which necessitated horses, wagons and teamsters, and the obligation to feed them. The overhead costs became continual, which in turn dictated that performances be presented as often as possible. It is from this method that the nineteenth-century circus evolved into the six-day schedule (Sundays were for travel or rest) of one day stands that has marked the genre into the present. The form and content of circus performances did not change with the adoption of the canvas tent. The biggest difference between the old and new methods was that the managers were now responsible for hiring and feeding horses and teamsters who did not perform. As circuses grew in size laborers to erect tents, seating and care for properties were added, but they came later.

Benjamin Brown was a cousin of J. Purdy Brown, their fathers were brothers. Both of them lived in Somers. Ben was hired in 1826 as the assistant horse breaker by Brown and Bailey, a position in which he trained ring horses and the boy apprentices who rode them. These duties were later described as ring-master, hostler and equestrian manager, but in such a small company as this one the tasks were combined.

Brown and Bailey, advertising as "Pavilion Circus," began their 1825

season on 22 November in Wilmington, Delaware. They quite likely went by sea from Westchester County to this opening stand. They carried seven performers, including Charles Sibery, the horse breaker. The canvas was set up in the yard of the Brass Keys Tavern. After a two-day appearance they moved on.⁴ We don't have their complete itinerary. In December they occupied a building in Alexandria, Virginia, where they performed for two weeks. In January, 1826, they were in Fredericksburg, Virginia, from where they went to Richmond. In late February and much of March they played Norfolk, Virginia. Their advertisements appeared in Smithfield, Petersburg, Lynchburg, Liberty, and Salem by the end of May. At some time in June they ascended the Shenandoah Valley, performing in Winchester on June 26. A month later, July 22, we find them in Frederick, Maryland, and in Hagerstown on August 3. Moving into Pennsylvania, they were at Chambersburg, Gettysburg and York in August. In September they

This Pavilion Circus ad was published on 25 October 1826. Pfening Archives.

PAVILION CIRCUS.

MESSRS. BROWN & BAILEY respectfully inform the citizens of Washington, and its vicinity, that they will give an **EQUESTRIAN PERFORMANCE THIS EVENING, October 28, 1826, on the Green adjoining the Circus.**

The performance to commence with a
GRAND ENTREE
Of **EIGHT** beautiful HORSES. Riding master, Mr. BROWN.

SONG, by Mr. CAMPBELL.
HORSEMANSHIP
By Master BIRDSALL, but eleven years old. Ring-master, Mr. Champlin.

Ground and Lofly Tumbling by the whole Company of Posturers.

COMIC DANCE ON STILTS, six feet high, by Master PROSSER.

HORSEMANSHIP by Master Sergeant, on TWO Shetland Ponies, who will jump his Whip, Hoop, and Garters, and conclude his elegant performance by jumping through a **BALLOON**, with the Ponies at speed. Clown, Mr. LEWIS.

Mr. BAILEY will introduce the Horse **ROB ROY**, Trained by himself, who will go through his astonishing performances.

HORSEMANSHIP, by Master PROSSER, without Saddle or Bridle. Clown, Mr. LEWIS.

The whole to conclude with
STILE VAULTING,
By the whole Company, viz: Messrs. Hunt, (acknowledged to be the greatest Vaultor in America) Champlin, Messrs. Sergeant, Prosser, Birdsall, Clark, Levi, Linnman, and clown, Lewis.

57. The doors will be opened at half past 6 o'clock, and performance commence at 7 o'clock.

The Pavilion secures ladies and Gentlemen from the weather, and covered seats offer comfort and convenience.

Admittance, box 60 cents, pit 25—children under 12 years of age half price.

Tickets to be had at Wm. Ginton's Drug Store, and at the Circus.

Oct 28—

reached Wilmington again, having come full circle and back to their starting point.

Since neither Brown nor Bailey left any explanation that has been discovered of why they chose to use a tent, or why they went to Virginia to inaugurate its use, we can only speculate that weather led them there. Certainly, winter in Virginia was preferable to that in Westchester County and environs. In many of their advertisements they said, "The pavilion secures Ladies and Gentlemen from the weather, and covered seats afford comfort and convenience." That they had the tent on their first stand indicates that they meant to travel as they did. No editorial comment has been found that speaks of the introduction of the tent as being unusual, despite its being the first one any auditor had seen. Thomas Nathans, in an 1889 letter said he saw the tent in 1826, and that it was a "sixty-foot round," meaning a circle of canvas sixty-feet in diameter.⁵ A theatre company had visited Virginia with tent productions in 1824, which may have had something to do with the lack of comment.

Charles Sibery left the company at some time after May, 1826, and Benjamin Brown then became the horse breaker. He is first identified as such in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania on 8 August. He arranged the presentation of the grand entree, the eight-horse walk-around that preceded all circus performances of that time, as well as performing the trained horse "Conqueror," one of the riderless animals often called "the horse of wisdom." Such a beast would dance, leap hurdles, and lie down and rise again at the trainer's commands.

As for the rest of the personnel, the clown was called Mr. Lewis, and he might have been Lewis Bailey. Several researchers have mentioned this possibility. The leading rider was nine-year-old Napoleon B. Turner, another was fourteen year old George Sergeant, an apprentice. A third boy, Master Prosser, presented a bareback riding act, beginning in August. When they reached Wilmington they hired a true vet-

eran of the ring, James Bancker, by which time Turner had left. Thus, with the exception of Lewis, Bancker and Ben Brown, the circus was largely presented by children. This was a financial ploy, as much as anything, as apprentices were not paid, except for occasional pocket money. The stud consisted of fourteen horses.

The little show moved into Washington, D. C. on 6 November 1826. For this winter stand, which lasted until 17 January, they set up in an existing building at 7th and C Streets, which had been built by William West, a circus manager, in 1819. Not needing their tent, Brown and Bailey sent it with Ben Brown and some of the performers to Fredericksburg, Virginia, where they opened on 11 December. Ben Brown's first essay into management had begun.



An unidentified drawing of what appears to be a 60 foot round top. Such a tent was used by J. Purdy Brown as early as 1825, and later by Ben Brown. Note the lack of a marquee entrance. Pfening Archives.

By this time, Ben had two apprentices of his own, Andrew Levi and Master Prosser. He said of the first, "He was a wonderful rider. We had a piece of canvas twelve feet wide, then a hoop eighteen inches in diameter covered with paper; a balloon it was called. And Levi held in his hand a hoop nine and a half inches in diameter. He'd jump [from his horse] over the banner, through the balloon and through the hoop, all at the same time (and land again on the horse)"⁶

Others who worked for Brown in

Fredericksburg were George Sergeant and a Mr. Johnstone, both riders. They were all back in Washington with Brown and Bailey in January.

It was in this season, 1827, that Brown & Bailey began their westward travel, moving through Kentucky and Tennessee into the Mississippi Valley. It was a path that they would follow until Purdy Brown's death in 1834.

Benjamin Brown did not accompany Brown and Bailey on their westward move in 1827. He left, possibly in Virginia, to join the "Pavilion Circus" being operated by his brothers Christopher and Herschel (1803-1864), who were moving south through the Carolinas. He had with him his apprentices, Andrew Levi and Master Prosser. In Charleston, in January, 1828, he was listed as managing the concern. Brother

called the "New Caravan of Living Animals" in 1828. He also owned what was called the "Boston Caravan of Living Animals," which was managed by his brother, Daniel Wright.

The Pavilion Circus was in Charleston from 17 January to 1 March. David Wright's menagerie opened in the city on 12 January. He had with him a lion, a puma, a bear, a baboon, a marmoset, and two monkeys trained to ride ponies in the ring; all in all, a small caravan.

On 1 February, Charles Wright arrived in Charleston with his larger menagerie, and the two units were exhibited together. On 7 February the Brown brothers invited Charles Wright to exhibit some animals in their ring. He complied by introducing a zebra, two camels, and a "Dandy Jack," a riding monkey, in the circus program. When the Browns left Charleston on 2 March, David Wright's menagerie accompanied them. It was this union that we referred to as being the first time a menagerie and a circus traveled together anywhere in the world.

Public opprobrium, especially from the pulpit and the press, was often manifested in the early nineteenth century, but menageries, considered educational at best, and harmless morally, were seldom condemned. By combining the two genres, showmen could offer the public a chance to see the animals without having to watch the ring performances. Whether this influenced the Browns or not, we don't know.

The combination remained together into December, 1828, when they reached Savannah, Georgia. The menagerie was in the same city, but showed its wares apart from the circus. The Browns joined with Asa Smith's Lafayette Circus, and the two companies were combined until 4 April. In this period they visited Charleston and Augusta, Georgia, spending seven weeks in each city. In April, Smith went back to Charleston, and the Browns continued touring, but no advertisements have been found for them until November. In that month they were in North Carolina.

Herschel Brown, still in advance of the Pavilion Circus, wrote from Fayetteville to Christopher, who was in Raleigh, on 25 November, that he

Herschel acted as the advance agent, renting the show lots and arranging for feed purchases and hotel rooms. John Dingess has written that the Brown brothers' circus was a subtroupe of Brown and Bailey, and we have no proof that it was not. In addition to Ben's apprentices the company had Master Sol Lipman, Master Thomas Nathans, and performers named Kelly, Guerin, Ned Derious, Bums, Clark and Johnson. Their eleven athletes made them a medium-sized show in that era.

It was in 1828 that the first combination of a menagerie and a circus traveled together, and it was the Brown brothers who provided the circus. Charles Wright (1792-1862), another Somers native, was in his third year of operating what he

had "just heard of the Caravan, it was in Camden the 21st instant." This implies the existence of an interest the Browns had in a menagerie, possibly the one David Wright had combined with their circus the year before. "One of the Lions are dead. Which one I do not know but without doubt it is our Lion. It would be about my luck."

He also wrote that, "Smith has been scouring this country for 2 or 3 months past, but has not been at (Fayetteville), has gone on now, I expect to Columbia." Thus, rival shows kept an eye on one another. The Pavilion Circus followed Herschel to Fayetteville in December, and then went on to Columbia, South Carolina.

The Browns decided to have their own circus in 1830, and with it to visit some of the Caribbean Islands, a trip which was extended into 1832, indicating financial success. They sailed from Charleston, and their first stop was St. Pierre, Martinique. All three brothers accompanied the firm. They had as performers (on 27 February) Andrew Levi, Frederick Hoffinaster, Napoleon Turner, Jean Richer, and a Master George (possibly George Sergeant). In addition to the human riders, Herschel Brown presented a riding monkey mounted on a pony. And they had two cages with them in which were a lion and a jaguar. These were not wheeled cages, as are presently used, but boxes hardly larger than the animals, and which were manhandled on and off wagons for display on saw-horses. Wheeled cages were introduced about 1832.

Handbills have survived for performances on 7 February and 7 June, 1830. Oddly, they do not specify the price of admission. We know from the permission to perform granted by the Governor that the cost of their license was ten per-cent of the gross profit. The man who owned the Temple Yard, the lot where they appeared, charged them eight dollars per performance.

On 10 July Ben Brown signed a contract with a shipping company to transport the circus to Barbados. In it the company was listed as being composed of seven equestrians, "his horses," an Eon, a Brazilian Tiger (meaning the jaguar), and several

CIRCUS;
CORNER OF WALNUT AND SEVENTH STREETS.
Benefit of Mr S. B. HOWES.

UNPARALLELED ATTRACTIONS!

Riding Master,..... Mr Martin.
Clown,..... George Stone.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT, OCT. 25th, 1837.

The Evening's entertainments to commence with
A GRAND CHASE MANŒUVRE,
By a Party of Horsemen.


EQUESTRIAN EXERCISES,
By Master L. STONE, on a single Horse.

BUILDING THE TOWER OF BABEL,
By all the Equestrians.

Feats of POSTURING and BALANCING,
By Mr and Master Howes.

MR TURNER will make his appearance as **ROB ROY,** on Two Horses.

OFFICER AND RECRUIT,
By Messrs. Whittaker and Stone.



HORSEMANSHIP by Mr S. B. Howes,
Who will conclude his act by carrying Master Jas. Howes, in many beautiful positions.

Horsemanship by Mr S. STOKES.
Slack Rope, by Mr JACKSON.

To conclude with the very laughable piece of
BILLY DUTTON.

Ben Brown was ringmaster for Howes' 1837 Eagle Circus. Author's collection.

monkeys. An added feature, not previously mentioned, was a balloon ascension on Barbados on 18 July.

A handbill in the Benjamin Brown papers for a performance on Barbados can be taken as typical of those presented during the Caribbean adventure:

-Grand entry of six horses, conducted by Mr. Brown. This was a display of costumes and accouterments that opened all circus performances in the period. The horses and riders would form various circles, dances and formations.

-Horsemanship by Master Hollmaster. Apprentice riding was invariably the first single act.

-Running vaulting by the whole company. These were leaps from the

ground onto moving horses.

-The Dashing Horseman, by Mr. Turner. In which he performed the "Peasant's Frolic," or "Flying Wardrobe," an old and popular act, wherein a seeming incompetent rider divested himself of street clothes to appear in rider's costume and present a finished riding act.

-Kitty Clover, Mr. Brown's trained horse. The riderless animal would fetch and carry various objects and conclude by leaping hurdles.

-Horsemanship by Monsieur Richer. This was "scenic riding," a dumb show, in which a narrative was presented. In this instance "The Dying Moor," a battle scene.

-Ground and Lofty Tumbling by the whole company. Somersaults, cartwheels, and leaps. Horsemanship by Master Levi. The act we described on page 13, involving hoops, balloons and a twelve-foot canvas.

-The Hunted Tailor, a comic scene. Another traditional act, in which a tailor who had never ridden, rents a horse, which proves to be unwilling to be mounted.⁷

The reader will note the absence of the clown in all this. He was there, however, participating in almost every act, either as an assistant to the performer, or parodying the action. The program given in Barbados is typical of American circus performances of that era.

Frederick Hoffmaster's apprenticeship ended in July 1830, and a contract for his services was made on 17 July between him and B. F. Brown & Co. It called for a salary of thirty Spanish dollars a month, his board and laundry bills, and a one-third benefit each three months. Benefits were an important part of a performer's income; in Hoffmaster's case he would receive one third of the gross profit from each of his. Though he was now his own man, he was still advertised as Master Hoffinaster, probably to make him seem younger, and therefore his act more unusual.

It is also apparent from an item in the collection that Herschel Brown had taken the animals and was offering them separately from the circus. This by 31 July. An unknown person (unknown because we can't read his signature) reported the free ticket list of 31 July to Ben Brown, and included

in it "one boy gave me the slip," meaning he sneaked in.

By October the two companies were in Paramaribo in Surinam; in November they shipped to Berbice. From there they went to Dernerary, reaching it in December, 1830. The bin of lading for the passage from Paramaribo to Berbice gives us another list of their consist. Dated 19 November, it says "eight persons, six horses, a lion, eleven monkeys, a tiger cage, and a pavilion spar." From this we can assume that the jaguar had died, and that they carried their own center pole for the tent. This last is interesting, as in the United States it was the habit of showmen to acquire a new pole daily, either by purchase, or by going into the woods to cut their own. It may be that straight, fifteen-foot trees were in short supply in the West Indies.

Two new faces joined in Denerary, Thomas Stewart and Master I. Travis, both riders. In March, 1831, the Browns went back to the states. With them went Andrew Levi, Fred Hollmaster, I. Heilman and I. Travis. Their passage was to New Bern, North Carolina.

Using the same title they had performed under in the West Indies, "Royal Pavilion Circus," the brothers toured Pennsylvania and Virginia in the fall of 1831. They added Mrs. William Williams to the program. An accomplished English rider, she had been in America since 1816. They also advertised six musicians parading in a bandwagon.

In January, 1832, Benjamin and Herschel Brown returned to Dernerary, sailing from Norfolk, Virginia with twelve horses and two "wag-gons." They were to perform over the winter on the island. Christopher Brown was in Somers, and Herschel wrote to him, asking that he send their youngest brother, Charles (1811-1875), to Dernerary with four or five horses. He also said that Charles should bring the well-known clown, Joseph Blackburn (1801-1841) with him. They were to pay Blackburn twelve dollars per week. Charles was also to bring any other good rider that he might find.

This was the last trip to the West Indies for the Browns of which we have proof. They may well have gone in other winters. It was a popular

The Giraffe and Circus united.



To be exhibited on Monday and Tuesday evenings next, (July 29th and 30th.)

This giraffe newspaper ad was published on July 26, 1839. Pfening Archives.

venue for American circuses, as well as for individual performers who would work for island managers.

There is nothing in the Benjamin Brown papers to indicate his occupation in 1833, but he may have worked for his cousin in 1834. Advertisements for J. Purdy Brown's circus in New Orleans in February of that year indicate a Mr. Brown as ringmaster. J. Purdy Brown died in Mobile, Alabama that summer, and his brother, Oscar W. Brown (d. 1842) took over the company. Oscar also listed Mr. Brown.

Eaton Stone, then an apprentice, in a biographical note, said that Ben Brown trained him for the ring in 1837. This was on Nathan Howes' Eagle Circus. We next hear of Brown in the employment of June, Titus & Angevine, one of the largest menageries of the time, being sent to Egypt to capture giraffes.

Lewis B. Lent (1813-1887) wrote to George Gliddon, the American counsel in Cairo on 19 November 1838, telling him of the firm's intention for "a new importation, and as the whole success of the enterprise depends upon great vigor and dispatch, we have determined to send a confidential agent to Egypt . . . This letter will be handed you by Mr. Benjamin

Brown, who has been in our service many years, and in whose integrity, judgement and efficiency we have every confidence. . . ."

As we know, Brown had not been many years with June, Titus & Angevine, but Lent was obviously trying to show his man's character. Gliddon had arranged for the shipment to America of two giraffes earlier in 1838, one of which had died. Lent's letter referred to the need to replace the loss.

Giraffes had been exhibited in America for the first time in 1838. A competitor of June, Titus and Angevine, Rufus Welch and his partners, imported two in June of that year, and they proved to be very popular exhibits. The animals were sent on tour separately, each accompanied by some antelopes. At fifty cents admission the profits were suggestive of Hachaliah Bailey's early elephants. An astonishing sight to American audiences, these tall, silent beasts were often too fragile for overland travel. Half of the ones imported in the late 1830's died within months of their arrival.

Ben Brown's passport was dated 21 November 1838. He arrived in London on 10 December. Alfred Cops, the head keeper at the menagerie in the Tower of London, was one of the experts on the care and feeding of exotic animals. Brown conferred with him before leaving for Egypt. He also met Cops' daughter, Mary, who was to become his wife in 1841. Reaching Alexandria in January, 1839, he armed himself with firmans and letters of safe conduct.

Stebbins B. June, nephew of John June, of June, Titus & Angevine, joined Brown in Cairo, intent upon accompanying him. They set out, Brown, June, three personal servants, and 102 Arabs. They were mounted on camels, and marched off 700 miles to Ahn Hamid. Here, Stebbins June turned back, returning to Cairo. Brown later said that since June was of blonde complexion he suffered greatly in the heat, often 103 degrees. Brown, being dark-complected, tanned rather than burned. In fact, he became so dark that when he reached Cairo again, with a long beard and his caftan and native shoes, people thought he was an Arab.

He proceeded to Fashoda, 1300 miles south of Cairo, then left the Nile for another 400 miles across the Nubian Desert. He contracted what he referred to as "African sickness," an unidentified fever, and had to lie on a rug in a hut for several weeks, tended by his servants.

Brown later told his grandson, "During the journey in Egypt, some of the tribes were very friendly, and others were hostile." He carried a Colt repeating rifle, which no Arab had ever seen. At a confrontation with a band of tribesman, Brown fired several times in the air. The Arabs sent a man forward on foot, who asked Brown's servant how often Brown loaded his gun. The reply was, "Every new moon." This quelled the robbery attempt!⁸

The exhibition captured five month-old giraffe calves, no doubt by killing or running off their mothers. Since the firman, or permit, under which he traveled, allowed for only four giraffes, he had to give up one. Traveling by night, and leading the captives, the team traversed three hundred miles of desert to return to the Nile. The calves were fed buffalo milk, and sometimes men were sent as far as ten miles to procure some. In addition to the giraffes, there were two Kordofan cows, some gazelles, a wild ass, and a horse that had been captured.

Upon reaching the river they boarded a boat for the trip up to Cairo. Here again, bandits tried to rob the caravan, but were beaten off by the sticks of the troupe. In Cairo, one year and two days after leaving there, Brown and June prepared to take the animals to New York. Because of epidemics and war in Europe, it was difficult to find shipping, but a Sardinian ship, *Helme*, was finally arranged for. One interesting fact that emerges from the preparations is that they carried 4,800 gallons of water on the trip.

While Brown was up the

Nile, Stebbins June and George Gliddon had purchased a giraffe in Cairo. This might mean that they shipped five of the beasts to New York. According to Brown's grandson, they put the animals on display at

Broadway and 40th Street in the summer of 1840. We have not been able to find any advertising or editorial comment on this exhibit.



June, Titus & Angevine owned the Van Amburgh menagerie, which had been touring Europe very successfully since 1836. In the fall of 1840, Ben Brown took the giraffes to England to join Van Amburgh. For the next four years he was employed by, and invested in, June, Titus & Angevine in England and Scotland.

We mentioned that he had met Alfred Cops' daughter, Mary, in 1838. They were married in March, 1841, and moved into the Tower. Although the menagerie had been removed from the Tower to Regent's Park, Cops, by a warrant from William IV, was allowed to live in the Tower until his death, which occurred in 1853. The Browns lived with him until they moved to America in 1844.

Of the giraffes, Brown sold one to the Duke of Devonshire, a dilettante zoo-keeper, in August, 1842 for L450. The others may have gone to Wombwell's Menagerie, as they advertised "giraffes" in the 1840's.

After returning to Westchester County in 1844, Ben Brown traveled one last season in 1846 with Van Amburgh & Co. when it came back from Europe. He sold his portion of the menagerie to his best friend, Gerard Crane, for \$7,000, and took up farming his property on what became known as Ben Brown Hill near Somers. He died in 1880, and is buried in Carmel, New York.

Even though his participation in so many field show innovations was casual, that is they were events in his pursuit of occupation, Benjamin Brown stands as one of the few men known in popular culture to be so widely involved with its early advances. As his grandson noted, he "led a life filled with more adventure than is given to but very few."

NOTES

1. Benjamin Brown, "Recollections. . . as told to Carrie Brown Rober (sic)." Author's collection.
2. "The Oldest of Showmen," interview, *New York Sun*, reprinted *Croton Falls News*, 17 July 1879.
3. Stuart Thayer, *Annals of the American Circus, Volume 1*, (1976), pgs. 4-31.
4. Advertisements, *Delaware Gazette* (Wilmington), 22 November 1825.
5. Letter, Thomas Nathans to J. J. Nathans, 11 December 1889, Fred P. Nathans collection.
6. *Croton Falls News*, 17 July 1879.
7. Handbill, Benjamin F. Brown Papers, Clements Library.
8. Benjamin Brown, "Recollections . . ."



Ringling-Barnum 1990 Animal Walk

Here are 80+ photos on a disc ready for you to enjoy viewing or to make your own prints. Photographed under ideal weather conditions in California.

\$19.95 Postpaid

These scenes include the unloading of the train and the march of elephants, horses etc. to the arena. Sharp photos. Money Order, Personal check, PayPal. Additional information at Tharp_p@bellsouth.net.

Paul R. Tharp
13 Rhododendron Way
Candler, North Carolina, 28715

EN ROUTE TO The Great Eastern

PART FOUR
By William L. Slout

The first indication of organizing the Great Eastern appeared in the New York *Clipper* of February 10, 1872. "Messrs. DeHaven and Haight were in Cincinnati last week, arranging to start from there with a menagerie about the middle of April. They are having the wagons made in Porkopolis. R. E. J. Miles, the well known manager, has engaged to travel with them." These three men, with the connection of past associations, would assemble a circus out of the remains of the former Col. C. T. Ames' Menagerie, Agnes Lake's Hippo-Olympiad, and Haight's Empire City Circus that was to experience a highly successful season through brazenly exaggerated advertising and an aggressively combative policy toward all rivals.

The Great Eastern was set afloat in the dawn of modern circuses, when the Barnum organization of 1871 established a new standard of operation. The size and expense of the Barnum Show was far beyond anything offered in the past—three large exhibition tents, separating the menagerie, the museum, and the arena, between five and eight horse tents holding about thirty head of baggage stock each, a total spread of canvas covering nearly three acres. The show moved in ninety-five to one hundred wagons. At the outset, the main tent seated some 5,000 people, but by the end of April, it

The cover of the 1874 Great Eastern courier. John Diesso collection.

had been expanded to accommodate over 7,000. The cost of operation was unprecedented in the circus business, with daily expenditures

GREAT EASTERN

Advance Herald.

W. W. DURAND, Editor.
1874.
THIRD SERIES—No. 2.



A WORD TO THE PUBLIC.
THIRD ANNUAL TOUR.

In once more coming before an appreciative and intelligent public for patronage, and what is dearer still to conscientious amusement eaters—warm and heartfelt approbation—the proprietors of the Great Eastern Menagerie, Museum, Aviary, Circus, Roman Hippodrome and Egyptian Caravan, feel that a grateful acknowledgment, and some carefully considered pledges for the future are not

GREAT EASTERN

Menagerie, Museum, Aviary,

CIRCUS

Roman Hippodrome and Egyptian Caravan.

COMING SOON.

amiss here; but, on the contrary, eminently wise and fitting, to the MILLIONS who so liberally patronized their enterprise last year. If such stupendous labors last year were so extensively rewarded and commended, what must be expected for the ensuing season? Only three years ago HAIGHT & Co. first concluded to put upon the road the largest show the world had ever seen, and at once a dozen able and trusted agents were dispatched to the uttermost parts of the world

amounting to as much as \$2,500. P. T. Barnum's Great Traveling Museum, Menagerie, Caravan and Hippodrome was in a league by itself.

In 1872, the outfit designated itself the "Greatest Show on Earth," an advertising slogan used for the first time that season, had grown to such proportions that it necessitated a move to rail travel. There were ten tents on the lot, and three ticket wagons, one of which was reserved for ladies (women's suffrage being a hot issue); and they were kept busy.

The idea for the Great Eastern probably originated with DeHaven while in the advance of Agnes Lake's Circus during the winter of 1870-1871. DeHaven, a man of big dreams, once said to agent Charley Pell, "Any man can start a circus with money, the thing of it is to put one on the road without any." He contended that powerful publicity, lavish advertising and good people in advance could keep a circus running; and, as the money came in, it could be built up along the way. Andrew Haight was the perfect man in advance and R. E. J. Miles, as a theatrical promoter, was experienced in financial matters. These three men put the Great Eastern on course.

The Great Eastern Menagerie, Museum, Aviary, Circus and Balloon Show was announced to debut at the Exposition Building in Cincinnati on March 25. Instead, it opened at the National Theatre on April 1, the site where R. E. J. Miles had been the lessee for the years 1868-1870. Because there was not room in the building for the menagerie, the animals were placed in the street as a gratuitous exhibition. The circus remained for a week, giving matinees daily.

In the *Clipper's* early season announcement, the proprietors were Dan Carpenter, R. E. J. Miles, George W. DeHaven and Andrew Haight. Carpenter, who was the treasurer, may have initially put up some money, but soon disappeared from the management roster. A. R. Scott was the advertising agent; Jacob Haight, was also listed as treasurer; W. Scott,

program agent; Barney Carroll, equestrian director; and Francis S. Koppe, leader of the band and co-proprietor of the sideshow with Ben S. Potter. Capt. Breese controlled the candy privilege. W. W. Durand, the general business agent, is attributed a large share of the show's success. Charles H. Day described him as "a typical Southerner, who smoked like a chimney and chewed plug tobacco and wrote with the sledgehammer of conviction."¹

The procession took the normal pattern, led by a bandwagon and followed by cage vans, all interspersed with people on horseback, the elephant Bismark, camels, etc. An advertised feature was Herr Elijah Lengel's wild cats "loose in the streets." Actually, Lengel sat atop a cage wagon, beneath a canopy, accompanied by a lion, two leopards and a dog. A calliope drawn by a dozen horses, belching steam and blaring out a racket, brought up the rear.

The Great Eastern was the only circus to make use of a calliope with

Great Eastern newspaper ad used in 1872. Pfening Archives.

the show this season; and, indeed, the only circus since 1860. Calliopes were used on the riverboats, but for people removed from the water routes it was still an object of astonishment, one that created both excitement and derision from the public and the press. Fred Dahlinger, Jr., in his research on calliopes, found no real description of this particular one and no indication of its source.²

The Racine (WI) *Advocate* expressed a sardonic opinion of the instrument, which we include here in its entirety: "Descend, o muse, and give us befitting language in which to describe that fearful and wonderful machine which goes under the classical name of Calliope--we confess that we are not equal to the task. Our vocabulary of superlatives is not large enough to give the reader the slightest idea of our opinion of it. From descriptions of the machine, we had acquired a sort of vague idea that it was a huge organ, whose seraphic strains would put to shame any music, which we had ever heard; under whose gentle but powerful influence the tigers became harmless as doves and the lions lay down with the lamb. You may judge then our

feelings when we heard the machine go off for the first time. Our impression was that a fire had broken out and that all the whistles in town were going at once; but when we found out what it was, our disgust was too deep for utterance. A choir of Tom cats or Shanghai roosters would furnish music which would be angelic harmony when compared with the Calliope. We have heard it said that it sounds better at a distance; we presume this is so, and the greater the distance the better."³

The museum consisted of Gen. Littlefinger, "the smallest man in the world," a fat woman; Prof. Owens, magician; Signor Ghio, warbler; a tank of Alaskan seals; and various curiosities. Not comparable to Barnum's exhibits, but what else was?

The ring performance was surprisingly strong for an infant organization, indeed, easily competitive with both

WAIT FOR THE MONSTER
OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.
BY RAILROAD.

TRANSPORTED BY **Seventy-Five CARS.** EXHIBITED UNDER **Six Monster TENTS.**

EDWARDSVILLE JULY 29, 1872.

ONE TICKET
ADmits YOU
TO THE SIX TENTS.

THE ONLY
REALLY GREAT
ZOOLOGICAL TRIUMPH!

Great Eastern
MENAGERIE
MUSEUM, AVIARY,
CIRCUS AND BALLOON SHOW!

AN IMMENSE WORLD
ON RAILROAD!
AT A
DAILY EXPENSE OF \$2,000
Which it leaves in every town or city
where it exhibits.

470 MEN AND HORSES,
1,050 ANIMALS,
And a Mammoth Bird and
Wonder Show.

75 CARS TO TRANSPORT IT FROM STAND TO STAND.

Notwithstanding the collection brought together by its experienced projectors, that
SIX IMMENSE PAVILIONS are required to exhibit this combination of

12 SHOWS IN ONE!
And One Price of Admission admits the ticket holder to the Six Tents.

THE LARGEST MENAGERIE ON EARTH



Barnum's and Forepaugh's. Apes and Emma Lake were there, as were the Carroll family--Madame and Barney, Master Willie and Annie and Dolly Varden. In addition, there were Mme. Cornelia, equestrienne; riders Charles H. Lowry and Fred Sylvester; gymnasts Thomas V. Watson, Jean Zacco and the Miaco Brothers; leapers, Jerome Tuttle and Adolph Gonzales; clowns Billy Andrews, P. H. Seaman, Lee Fowler and Tony Ashton. Robert Ellis introduced the elephant Bismark; Herr Lengel performed with a den of lions, tigers and panthers. The champion leaper George M. Kelly was added later in the month.

After a week in Cincinnati, the show moved into Kentucky. The *Clipper* reported the night's receipts at Lexington were \$2,200; the matinee at Frankfort, \$1,100. Louisville followed on Friday and Saturday, April 13 and 14, with the outfit set up on the corner of Fourth and Chestnut Streets. A pre-arrival announcement lauded the advance advertising. "The gorgeous posters and extensive presentation of the many features of the circus and menagerie have attracted much curiosity, and no doubt an excellent business will be done in this city."⁴ Kentucky dates continued through May 1, after which the show moved into Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin.

The circus arrived late at Evansville on the 2nd, and did not get ready for business until nearly three o'clock. Both the parade and the balloon ascension were omitted. In spite of this, attendance for both performances was sizable. The *Daily Journal* of May 3 reported that "The animal collection is not as large as we were led to believe it would be, but it is still very interesting, particularly the young lions, the young elephant and the camels; but there is still room for more, considering the exhibition is 'twelve shows in one.'"

A seven day stand in Chicago was split between the West Side, on the corner of Madison and Elizabeth Streets (May 15-18); and the South Side, on the corner of State and Twenty-second Streets (May 20-22). We remind the reader that the great Chicago fire was but seven months past, ignited on that fateful Sunday evening at 9 o'clock of October 8,

1871. The inferno, abetted by a strong wind out of the southwest, created a devastated district encompassing an area four miles long and, on average, three-quarters of a mile wide, laying siege to some eighteen thousand buildings and causing a total of two hundred millions dollars of damage. One hundred thousand people on the North and East Sides of the city lost their homes and an untold number of work places. One might expect that the unfortunate citizens of Chicago were not ready for circus entertainment; but that would prove wrong.

THE
Great Six Tent Show,
COVERING THREE SOLID SQUARES
and the streets nearly four acres of ground and
occupying almost 10,000 yards of canvas.
A World on Railroad, at an Expense
Daily of \$2,000
TWENTY-SIX DENS OF WILD ANIMALS
(count the caves in procession), with elephants, camels
and a
Museum of Startling Wonders.



Double Circus Troupe.
Two performances in separate pavilions at the same
time, by the first talent of Europe and America.
Two Grand Orchestras and the Steam Piano.
The most brilliant and attractive street pageant ever
made.
Three Brass and Reed Bands, and a
Martial Band.
60 LADIES AND GENTLEMEN OF THE
ARMY, and 40 mounted police in procession.
Tigers, Panthers and Lions Loose in the Streets.
COMMENCING MONDAY, JULY 22,
AND CONTINUING FIVE DAYS, on lots extend-
ing from Eighth to Eleventh, on Spruce street.
GREAT EASTERN MENAGERIE, MUSEUM,
AVIARY, CIRCUS AND BALLOON SHOW.
THE CHALLENGE SHOW OF THE PERIOD!
Gratuitous Balloon Ascension Every Day,
and Matinee Every Afternoon.
Tickets for sale to-day at the Woodward Book Store;
E. P. Gray, 477 North Fourth street; Runkle Bros.
Musical Store, 18 South Fifth street; St. Louis Tele-
graph News Company, 1 North Fifth, and at Over-
ton's News Stand, Southern Hotel.
Admission to the 6 Tents, 50c; Children, 25c.

This newspaper ad was in the July 20, 1872 *St. Louis Missouri Democrat*, Author's collection.

The Great Eastern ads indicated four mammoth pavilions, covering three acres of ground, with a menagerie of twenty-six dens of wild animals, carpeted seats for the

women, and the great elephant Bismark. "In consequence of the magnitude of the exhibition and the Herculean labor to be performed in order to get ready for an afternoon performance May 15, a grand street display will not take place on Wednesday." However, there would be the gratuitous balloon ascension and the exhibition of the musical callopie each day at 2 p.m.⁵

The receipts of the matinee on this opening day were quoted at something over \$1,700. As for the evening: "If the fact that over 7,500 persons were in attendance argues anything for the popularity of the establishment, there can be no doubting its success. The actual amount taken in at the door last evening was \$8,003.50."⁶

In truth, the crowd was so immense on the lot for opening night that the canvases were not large enough to accommodate all of it. The *Tribune* stated that it was "by far the largest crowd ever assembled beneath a canvas in Chicago, if not in the world." The estimate was 6,000 people. "The jam at last became so dense and irresistible that the ring ropes were broken in, and the charmed circle was given over to a struggling mass of humanity. The performers were fairly crowded out, and retired to the dressing-rooms, leaving the ring in the possession of the audience. A dozen policemen proved powerless to restore order; the band essayed some soothing strains to no purpose; the clown exhausted his wit and his indignation without avail; and at last, dernier ressort, the elephant was brought in and trotted ferociously around the ring, but as fast as the ungainly brute cleared a space the crowd ran in behind him, so that the only good he accomplished was to stir up matters, very much as one stirs up punch with a spoon by keeping it moving round and round." The elephant was finally led away, and it was not until a large number of people left the pavilion that the performance was allowed to continue. Even so, only a portion of the program was given.⁷

The Great Eastern's move to the South Side appears to have maintained the established momentum. "Here there was quite as great a rush

to it as was experienced on the other side of the river. The large tent last night was crowded to the full, and the performances were received with unbounded satisfaction." On the Wednesday afternoon, a benefit showing was given for the Orphan Asylum, under the patronage of Gen. Sherman, the Mayor of Elgin and the people involved in the management of the place.⁸

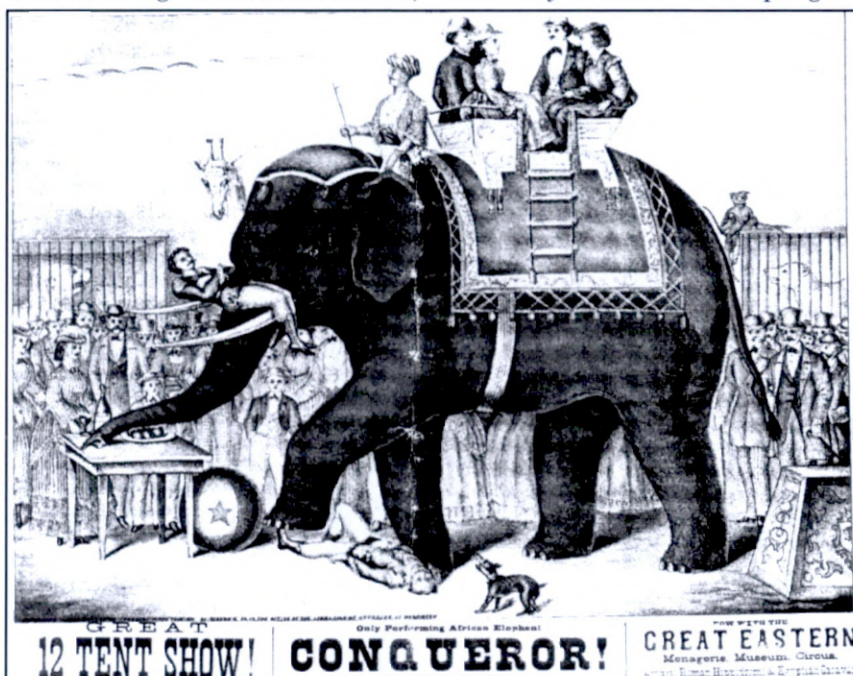
We might add here that another circus establishment opened in Chicago at this time on a lot in the unburned west side of the city, on Clinton Street, between Washington and Randolph, "Nixon's Parisian Hippodrome and Chicago Amphitheatre." The front of the edifice presented an attractive appearance with gas jets extending the entire length and an elegant arch over the entrance. The interior was arranged with chairs in tiers from the ring to the canvas top and a commodious promenade was adored by panels elaborately illustrated with scenes from the sports and pastimes of former years, rendered by the well-known Chicago artist R. W. Wallis. The place was lighted with gas, thoroughly ventilated, and could comfortably accommodate 2,500 people. Admission to the building was 500 for the parquet and dress circle, 750 for reserved chairs, and 250 for children under ten. "There was a very large crowd in attendance upon the initial performance," the *Inter-Ocean* reported, "large enough to test the strength of the house, the hasty construction of which had raised some doubts as to its safety. The performances were not of a very novel character, but good of their kind, and those of the audience who were able to endure the suffocating atmosphere of the interior ought to have been pretty well satisfied."⁹

The Great Eastern spent the month of June in Wisconsin and Minnesota for the most part. According to the *City Times*, performances at Janesville on the 3rd were well attended. The parade began around ten o'clock. "There were a number of beautifully painted cages containing animals, on top of one of which Mr. Lengel the lion tamer was seated, caressing a large Bengal tiger and a leopard, which did not act in a very leopardly manner; two camels

and a microscopic elephant also took part in the procession, which was closed by the wonderful calliope, a sort of a cross between a steam whistle and a hand organ, and which proved highly attractive to the small fry." The paper also made note of the "accompanying number of side shows, spring guns, etc., where considerable money was wasted."

The circus came to Fon du Lac on the 4th in, according to the *Daily Commonwealth* man, twenty-five freight cars. And in his judgment, "The Great Eastern comes as being near what it advertises to be as almost any that comes to Wisconsin. There is a large crowd in attendance,

show "brought together the largest number of people ever seen in one body in this city." The afternoon performance was said to have had a ticket sale of \$2,500, or 5,000 customers; the night attendance a 1,000 fewer. The performances were considered first-rate, and the reporter "had no hesitation in saying the 'Great Eastern' is a number one show and deserving of patronage wherever it goes." It appears that Herr Lengel received injuries while at Portage City, so his turn was eliminated for the date. St. Paul played host to the circus on June 17 and 18, Minneapolis followed on the 20th. The *Daily Tribune* was unapologetic



Great Eastern poster featuring Conqueror the elephant. Courtesy of The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Tibbals Digital Collection.

and will be a still larger one tonight."¹⁰ At Columbus, Wisconsin, on June 9 the town was jammed with people visiting the place, with an afternoon house of about \$1,000. A comment in the *Watertown Republican* of June 12 noted, "It is fair to assume the street display hardly came up to general expectations, several things in the bills being minus in the procession."

Four immense tents were advertised for the La Crosse date of June 13. The *Daily Republican and Leader* announced the following day that the

in its praise. "Unquestionably the Great Eastern Circus, Menagerie, Aviary and Balloon Show is one of the greatest exhibitions on the road. Their caravan, as it paraded the streets yesterday, formed an imposing sight. The procession must have been a mile long, and the whole concern in all its appointments is first class. Both afternoon and evening the tents were crowded and every one came away delighted."¹¹ Iowa, Missouri and Illinois were visited in July. At Clinton, the *Age* writer commented that the show came "nearer filling the bill advertised than circuses usually do." He was satisfied with the menagerie—"Of course this part of the show attracted many who would not otherwise have attended."

The arenic performance was similar to circuses generally, but the Carroll family stood out. "Master Carroll who is but thirteen years old, secured applause repeatedly and he earned it in every case. He turned somersaults backwards several times in succession while his horse was on the gallop. He is surely an equestrian wonder."¹²

At Burlington on the 11th, local review of the Great Eastern was as glowing as many before it. "All Burlington, most of Des Moines County, and two-thirds of Western Illinois, were in town, yesterday, gazing with delighted eyes upon the gorgeous pageantry of the circus. From dawning morn until high twelve, the happy people thronged the business streets, or sought with panting eagerness the shady corners. . . . At eleven o'clock, the lookers out for the grand cavalcade heralded its approach. They saw it on its winding way, and were happy. . . . The band and the Oriental Monarch among his tigers and leopards were 'the cynosure of all eyes' until the calliope and its attendant host appeared. The Dromedaries and the baby elephant and the buffalo calf were warmly welcomed. The music of the steam whistle was enchanting. It did not excite much enthusiasm, however, owing probably to the fact that we have a great deal of it at home." Burlington being on the river, the citizens were familiar with the steam organs on many of the passing boats. The crowds here were immense; filling what the writer termed "the three-fold" tents. The circus tent, in particular, was jammed.¹³

The citizens of Keokuk lined the streets "on the tip-toe of expectation" during the morning of the 10th. The *Gate City* observed that the procession came and went and was merely a repetition of what had been seen before. The calliope, however, was deserving of mention. "The particular



A poster featuring Emma Lake. Courtesy of The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Tibbals Digital Collection.

novelty was a steam musical institution on wheels, which screeched and blowed much like the screeching and blowing heard every hour on the Levee." The paper noted that the circus required thirty-three cars to transport it from Fort Madison to Keokuk.¹⁴ The circus visited St. Louis for five days beginning July 22. Here we see for the first time in the St. Louis *Democrat* of July 20 the claim of "The Six Great Tent Show," not four as had previously been in the advertisements. The ads also read, "DOUBLE CIRCUS RING. Two performances in separate pavilions at the same time, by the first talent of Europe and America. Two grand orchestras and a steam piano." Earlier ads of the 13th and 14th were still using the "Four Immense Pavilion" claim. It is possible that former cuts and text inserts were still in use; or can it be that at some point in July of 1872, perhaps at this St. Louis stand, the Great Eastern became the first two-ring American circus? Not likely.

The pre-announcement in the St. Louis *Times* reflected the usual advertising boasts. "The mammoth combination will spread its canvas, comprising six large tents, tomorrow on the lots extending from Eighth to Eleventh on Spruce streets. The show includes twenty-six dens of wild animals, with elephants, camels, a museum of startling wonders and a full double circus company. The

grand entre will be made on Monday morning, headed by three brass and reed bands and a large martial band, and our citizens will have an opportunity of seeing tigers, panthers and lions marching along loose in the streets. A really good show like this cannot fail to do an immense busi-

ness."¹⁵

A day after the fact the *Democrat* acknowledged that a large crowd had filled the streets, "attracted by the gorgeous parade which was enlivened by three bands of music, a steam calliope, a cloud of banners, squadrons of prancing horses, and a number of wild beasts." The opening night audience was "almost uncontrollably large," according to the paper. "It surged back and forward like a great sea, rippling waves against the walls of tents, coursing irresistibly through the passage ways that connected the different apartments and drifting about in the wide hippodromes." The writer was pleased with the selection of the performers, which was confirmed by "the constant storms of applause." However, not once did he mention two rings in separate tents giving simultaneous performances.¹⁶ A bit of excitement occurred on the morning of the 23rd at the Southern Hotel. Herr Lengel entered the lobby with his pet leopard and reached the cigar stand before the animal arose and put its front paws on the counter, sending cigar boxes tumbling about. Lengel restrained the animal and calmly led it through the rotunda, a wide path being made by the spectators, and into the bar where he proceeded to consume an order of softshelled crabs. After which, he led the leopard out. No three-column ad was needed to publicize the circus on this day.¹⁷

There was rain that evening, but it had little effect on diminishing the attendance. The *Democrat* reported, "The series of tents were thronged

again, and the brilliant exhibitions in the arena were loudly applauded." Notice it did not say "arenas," thereby adding to the dilemma of two rings. As the performance neared its close, the gasoline lights suspended on the center pole caught the rigging on fire, threatening to ignite the tent. Fortunately, the rain had saturated the canvas, making it fire resistant. The lights were pulled down and the blaze was doused with water. Meanwhile the crowd scattered in every direction, to the exits and under the sidewall, all screaming and yelling. The management eventually calmed the disorder, put up new lights and the performance continued to its end.¹⁸ The *Democrat* of the 26th gave a final note in summary of the week's stay. "The exhibitions have been alike profitable to the public and to the managers, the latter having reaped a harvest from the immense throngs that have been constantly in attendance. Among the many attractions during the week have been the performances of Miss Emma Lake, who has a very winning face and is an exceedingly graceful and dashing equestrienne."

The stand at Belleville, Illinois, on July 27, encountered a ticket-selling problem. A young man buying two seats for the matinee claimed he gave the seller a five-dollar bill and received no change in return. Getting no satisfaction from the seller, the man went to the office of the Justice of the Peace, from which he received a writ of attachment. At the end of the evening performance, an officer-named Seifort, bent on attaching one of the horses, went to the circus grounds, where workers taking down the tent set upon him. They beat him fiercely, pummeling him from one side of the ring to the other, like some low rated heavyweight. Seifort was able to draw a revolver, but before he could use it the piece was knocked from his hands. In the scuffle, he was hit on the head with a large wooden stake, which crushed his skull. He was taken home in an unconscious state, from which he never recovered.¹⁹ For the Edwardsville date of July 29, the ad read, "One Ticket Admits You to the Six Tents;" but again, no mention of a double company and simultaneous performances.

The Great Eastern spent the

month of August in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Pennsylvania. A two-day stand at Cleveland opened on the West Side of the city at the corner of Detroit and Oakland Streets on August 20 to large crowds for both afternoon and evening performances. On the 21st the company moved across to the East Side at the corner of Superior and Dodge Streets, where there were three performances given. The *Herald* indicated that the one at 10 a.m. was "for the special benefit of ladies and children, who by going at that hour will avoid the crowds of the afternoon and evening." At the night show a number of the troupe were unable to perform due to illness caused by the excessive heat.²⁰

The show exhibited at Union Park, Allegheny City, Pennsylvania, on the 23rd to what the *Pittsburgh Post* called immense audiences. "The performances and curiosities are well worth seeing. The balloon ascension was a success and was witnessed by a large crowd of spectators." On the 24th, the long train of wagons and vans crossed the river, passed through the principal streets of



Pittsburgh, set up on a lot at Penn and Thirty-first Streets and again performed to good business. From the correspondent to the *Clipper* we learn that one ticket was good for the museum, menagerie and the circus, "three separate tents" and that the menagerie count was fifteen cages.²¹ However, the advertising in the *Cleveland Herald* and the *Pittsburgh Post* still exaggerated a "Six Tent Show" and "the largest collection of animals in the United States."

The Great Eastern started into the South with the beginning of September and remained in the southern states until closing in mid-December. It visited Augusta, Georgia for September 12, and still claimed to be a six-tent outfit with three performances a day, but no indication of a double ring.

At Charleston, South Carolina, for the 13th and 14th, the *Daily Courier* writer was astonished at the riding of an infant. "Charleston has had the honor for the past two days of seeing, perhaps, the youngest and tiniest Knight of the Sawdust that ever bestrode a horse or won the plaudits of an audience. Master Dolly Varden Carroll, who belongs to the Great Eastern Circus, is a prodigy of such juvenile proportions as has never yet appeared before the public. On Saturday, when he made his appearance in the ring, amid a grand flourish from the band, there was heard a murmur of astonishment and bewilderment from the female portion of the audience. Imagine an infant of about three summers, two feet four inches in height, and of about twenty pounds weight, trotting into the ring, and approaching a double team of horses, with the avowed intention of performing equestrian feats on their backs, and you will have an idea of Master Dolly Varden Carroll's appearance."²²

Earlier in the century, there was a public clamoring to watch children enact adult roles in the theatres of both England and America. We do not refer to the Elizabethan child actors who were trained to perform women in a company of adult males, for in Shakespeare's day they functioned within the established conventions of 16th century theatre; whereas the 19th century infant prodigy performed a repertory of difficult roles, usually requiring a mature virility, alongside a company of adults, and was made "to hector, and combat, and conquer what he could hardly reach."

Master William Henry West Betty, the most celebrated child actor of the 19th century, a boy of thirteen years when he became the rage of London,

charmed the theatre-going public into a temporary loss of rationality and engendered a national enthusiasm. His brief but flamboyant career opened the way for innumerable sucklings with such whimsical titles as Infant Columbine, Infant Clown, Infant Hercules and Infant Vestris. As late as 1851, Barnum in America and Europe was promoting the Bateman Sisters (Kate and Ellen). The girls, six and eight years of age, performed Shakespearean scenes and farce afterpieces. The circus was not immune from using infant prodigies as feature attraction, usually apprentices, with names fronted by "Master" so-and-so or "Young" so-and-so, and the younger the better for audience appeal. In 1836, Thomas Taplin Cooke brought his stable of child performers to this country, a troupe of precocious youngsters, astride ponies, flailing into combat, creating a romantic illusion that particularly please the female section of the audience.²³

According to the *Charleston Daily Courier*, Dolly was born in New York State in November of 1868, making him three years, ten months old. Mr. and Mrs. M. B. Carroll were his parents. Further, "At the mature age of eleven months Master Dolly first began life on his own account by discarding the creeping process of locomotion and attempting to move about on his own pedal extremities. In these attempts, his success was so marked that he was urged to undergo a course of training for a profession he had selected. Accordingly when he had reached the age of three years and a half he was put upon horseback, under the tuition of his father, and after two or three months of training, in which he suffered several narrow escapes from such trifling accidents as being trodden under the horses feet, or having his brains dashed out, Master Dolly made his first appearance in public. He has been acting now just about three weeks, and in a conversation with a reporter of the *Courier* on Saturday he expressed his great liking for the profession. He further stated that as yet his performance consisted only of riding around the ring, standing on his father's pericranium, but he professed great confidence in his ability to ride by himself.

BURLINGTON. THURSDAY. JULY 11.
ONLY REALLY GREAT ZOOLOGICAL TRIUMPH!
A World on Railroad, at an expense of \$2,700 daily, which is heavy in the towns or cities where it exhibits. 1,700 men and horses. 1,000 animals. 240 Cattle and 600 Cows.
GREAT EASTERN
Museum, Menagerie, Aviary, Circus
AND BALLOON SHOW.



MATINEE IN THE AFTERNOON
HALF A MILLION DOLLARS IN ACTUAL CASH
Has been expended in completing the most complete and up-to-date
The Monarch Mastodon of the Road!

Newspaper ad used in Burlington, Iowa on July 4, 1872. Author's collection.

and stated that he intended to do so as soon as 'papa' would let him."

Three summers old, indeed. Dolly Varden was either a dwarf or midget, a ward of Barney Carroll's, performing in the guise of a perennial toddler. The reader will remember the earlier carrying act of Carroll's with little Willie, who now, a few years later, is apparently too heavy for such acrobatics, and, therefore, is being replaced by an eternally small substitute. We might suggest that Dolly's was an adopted name inspired by the original "Dolly Varden," a type of female attire, a gaily-printed muslin dress popular from 1865 to 1870.²⁴

The Great Eastern arrived at Charleston by way of the South Carolina Railroad on September 13 and took possession of the Citadel Green lot. There was no matinee given on that day, but its place was taken by the street procession, which attracted a sizable curbside crowd. As described in the *Daily Courier*, the spectacle was headed by a handsome bandwagon; following up was Heff Lengel atop one of the cages with his pet feline performers and a line of other cages, each confining a wild beast of some sort, which could be

only partially seen through the air holes on the sides. And, of course, there was the impatiently anticipate steam calliope, "whose music was loud enough to be heard squares off." Bringing up the rear were the single elephant, some camels and other animals on the hoof.

The evening performance accommodated the largest and most respectable audience since the war. There were indeed six pavilions, all arranged so that each exhibition led comfortably to another and could be easily viewed at one's leisure. The main canvas was brilliantly lighted by gas manufactured on the spot, which created a pleasing effect upon the gold and silver

banners over the arena and enriched the colorful costumes of the performers as they went through their paces.

The man from the *Courier* expressed satisfaction with the performances. "The acting was excellent throughout, and in some instances extra fine. The startling trapeze performance; the riding, and especially by the little girl and infant boy; the grand and lofty tumbling, all were better than we have witnessed in years."²⁵

At Savannah, for September 17 and 18, the six tents were advertised and, in a September 14 ad, a double-ring. Again, there were to be three performances daily, as a "Grand Moral Matinee" for 10:00 a. m. was added. However, because the circus train arrived late, only the evening performance was given on the first day. In spite of the inclement weather, the company played to standing room and turn away business. Yet, no confirmation of a double ring.

Haight's shows had always been popular in Georgia, and this year was no exception. The *Savannah Morning News* led its story on the following day with, "This colossal amusement institution, decidedly the largest arenic and zoological display ever in this section, had an immense house last night." The writer, heavily influenced by the handouts of the press agent, judged the menagerie to

be "complete and meritorious," containing "every rare animal to be found in the jungles of Bengal, the wilds of Africa, the hot sand deserts of the East and the palace-pens of Egypt." Continuing: "The collection of birds, monkeys, etc., is complete, and cannot fail to at once attract the attention of lovers of ornithology and the Darwin theory. Every parent who desires his children schooled in this branch of moral instruction, should not fail to avail himself of this most excellent opportunity to give the little ones a lesson. This tent being entirely separate and distant from the arenic performance gives those who desire to see the menagerie alone, without being compelled to witness the circus, such a rare chance as they will not soon have again."²⁶

Gold stars were awarded to Annie and Willie Carroll, Barney Carroll and Dolly Vardon, the horizontal bar act of Tony Ashton, and the hurdle riding of Charles Lowry. Since we last listed the roster of performers, we find new additions that include the Runnell Brothers, hat spinners; A. P. Durand, general performer; and William Painter, gymnast and acrobat. However, there was still no comment from the local press about the simultaneous performances. In viewing the single ring, at least, the parting item of the 19th included, "The tumbling was good, the posturing excellent, the trapeze act thrilling. . . . But we didn't see the six tents or the ten lady riders."²⁷ At last someone took the trouble to count.

Another item on the 19th suggested grift. "As usual, at all large gatherings, there was a fair sprinkling of the light-fingered gentry at the circus on Tuesday night, who had an eye to business. We are informed, that a lady in passing from one tent to another, had her pocket picked of her portmonaie (sic) containing sixteen dollars. Why people should go in to such crowds with any amount of money on their persons is a mystery that we cannot now explain." As it happened inside the facility, it suggests that someone paid for a profitable privilege.

At Thomasville on the 25th, the parade appeared limited because of threatening weather, so the *Times* reported. "The train of animals,

cages, band wagons, and last, but not least, their celebrated steam piano made up the show. . . . Outside of this they did not attempt any street display, except the daring feat of a man riding on top of a wagon with three loose tigers." The calliope belched "Up in a Balloon, Boye" as it passed down Broad Streets.²⁸ This sounds like the usual lineup, the weather being a good excuse for a procession much less than a mile in length.

When Atlanta was visited on the October 5, the Atlanta press wrote all the right things as usual. Noting that the circus raised its "six tents" and that the natives were all charmed by the spectacle, the *Constitution* continued with, "The Great Eastern, by its bills, promised a great deal, and its performances filled the bills. Andrew Haight is along, and Haight never travels with, or gets up any other but a first class show. The artists are all first-class, the clowns witty, the horses in fine condition and well trained, the animals in good order and full of life."²⁹ The *Sun* reported that, "Not less than 8,000 persons, of all ages and all classes, witnessed the arenic, hippodramatic and zoological exhibition of this magnificent combination last night. Such an assemblage of people was probably never seen in Atlanta; and among them were about 4,000 women, who came, the highest and



the lowest, to see the grand medley performance by sixty skillful professionals, and the magnificent array in the zoological department." It confirmed that three entire pavilions were devoted to the menagerie--monkeys, baboons, panthers, leopards, lions, bears, wolves, hyenas, camels, deer, moose, buffalo, elephants, ponies, and a number of birds. "One of the most wonderful, if not the most wonderful features of this combination is the little boy rider, Dolly Varden Carroll. A little boy, to all

appearance not more than two years of age, balances himself on the head of one of the equestrians, and rides around the ring at a fearful speed. Altogether this circus and menagerie is one of the most remarkable combinations before the public."³⁰

The Great Eastern continued in Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee and Alabama during the remainder of the tour. At Pensacola, Florida for October 19, the ad clearly stated, "Double Circus Troupe, and Double Circus Performances Given in Separate Tents at the Same Time." However, for the Mobile dates of October 21 and 22 we found no evidence of this double performance.

The circus arrived at Mobile on a Sunday evening, and was fresh and ready for the street procession the following morning, which elicited a positive reaction from the local press. Calling it a "stupendous affair," the *Daily Register* of the show expressed pleasure at "the long line of wagons, filled with trained animals, the camels and elephant tamed loose in the street, the brass band and calliope, all proving that the Great Eastern was certainly a big thing on wheels." After viewing the menagerie and the arenic performance, the writer conceded, "that the herald of the Great Eastern had not exaggerated its proportions or its excellence."

Reportage on the 23rd was equally positive, "This circus and menagerie, the most extensive which has visited us, folded its tents and went away last night, after affording our people much amusement and lining the pockets of the enterprising managers with greenbacks. At each performance, the six tents were crowded fully, rather uncomfortably so in fact, by all classes of people, who expressed their unqualified delight at the manner in which they were entertained, the arenic performance being far superior to that usually found in the generality of circuses. Take it all in all, the mammoth show, including the fine collection of animals, is the best, in all its departments, which we have seen in this part of the country and we can safely hand over the Great Eastern, and its

polite managers and agents, to the favorable notice of our brothers of the quill in other places."³¹

The season ended at Selma, Alabama, on December 13, 1872, with the two-ring claim still in question. The show traveled a total of 9,404 miles and netted a large profit. C. G. Sturtevant gave the figure at \$100,000, George Hall, Jr., at \$350,000, and W. W. Durand at \$424,000.³² The correct amount may lie somewhere in the middle.

We have found no evidence of there being simultaneous circus performances. How could this have been accomplished? Two performances occurring in separate tents at the same time, with conflicting noises of band and audience? In addition, how was it done with a performing roster that was seemingly the same as at the start of the season?

No contemporary writer has bothered to inform us. John A. Dingess, who was an agent for the show during the latter part of the season, wrote in his unpublished manuscript that DeHaven conceived the idea of the second ring. "Not two rings, wherein inferior performances were given, 'as is the custom nowadays,' but two separate tents, with equestrian performances in each, at one and the same time." Unfortunately, that is the extent of his explanation.

The Great Eastern's chief rival, P. T. Barnum's Great Traveling World's Fair, was using "Six Separate Colossal Tents" this year and had frequently included the line in its advertising: "The first and only show in the world that uses a double circus ring, and requires a double circus troupe of performers." Actually, the second ring was formed by the increased space between the ring and the audience, created by the use of a larger canvas pavilion to accommodate an extended seating area. This space, which formed a ring around the ring, was for circuses the origin of what we now refer to as the hippodrome track. Therefore, the true explanation for the advertisements of two rings in 1872 is that there was a new performing area around the single ring that was used for greater



spectacle.

The Barnum show followed the Great Eastern into St. Louis by a week. With such competition so close, the Great Eastern adversary usurped the Barnum advertisements by claiming six tents and a second ring of their own. That is the only explanation possible.

With the election over, Ulysses S. Grant winning handily, the proprietors of the Great Eastern entered a new year with money in their pockets; but the three men in the "tub" parted following the successful first season, with DeHaven and Miles joining Spencer Q. Stokes in taking out the Great Chicago Show, leaving Haight to pilot the Great Eastern for 1873.

Notes

1. Charles H. Day, "Happy Days at the St. Charles," *Billboard*, November 5, 1904.
2. Notes made by Fred Dahlinger, Jr., for a more extensive piece on calliopes.
3. Racine (WI) *Advocate*, June 1, 1872.
4. Louisville (KY) *Courier-Journal*, April 13, 1872.
5. Chicago (IL) *Tribune*, May 10, 1872.
6. Chicago (IL) *Inter-Ocean*, May 16, 1872.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Chicago (IL) *Inter-Ocean*, May 21, 1872.
9. *Ibid.*
10. Fon du Lac (WI) *Daily Commonwealth*, June 4, 1872.
11. Minneapolis (MN) *Daily Tribune*, June 21, 1872.
12. Clinton (IA) *Age*, July 3, 1872.
13. Burlington (IA) *Gazette*, July 12, 1872.
14. Keokuk (IA) *Gate City*, July 14, 1872.
15. St. Louis (MO) *Times*, July 21, 1872.
16. St. Louis (MO) *Democrat*, July 23, 1872. The parade went from the circus lot up Seventh Street to Franklin Avenue to

Twentieth Street, up Twentieth to O'Fallon to Broadway, down Broadway to Fourth, down Fourth passed French Market to Carondelet Avenue, down Carondelet to Russell Avenue, Russell to Union Park, up Decatur Street to Park, down Park Street to Ninth, up Ninth to Hickory, Hickory to Seventh, Seventh to Spruce and to the lot.

17. St. Louis (MO) *Democrat*, July 24, 1872.

18. *Ibid.*

19. New York *Clipper*, August 10, 1872.

20. Cleveland (OH) *Herald*, August 21 and 22, 1872.

21. New York *Clipper*, September 7, 1872.

22. Charleston (SC) *Daily Courier*, September 16, 1872.

23. On May 16, 1805, less than a month after Betty completed his first successful season, Master Mori, the Young Orphius, performed a concerto on the violin at Covent Garden. A short time later, Master Wigley, a four year old, executed several pieces of military music on the bugle horn at Drury Lane. That same year, the Belfast theatre company was augmented by the appearance of Miss Mudie, an eight year old, hailed as the female Betty. A young actor, billed as the American Roscius, John Howard Payne, made his first appearance on the stage as Norval in 1809. In 1817 the six-year old American, Miss Clara Fisher, was introduced at Drury Lane. Five year old Master Joseph Burke, the Irish Roscius, was an instant favorite at the Theatre Royal, Dublin, in 1824. Called the "greatest musical and dramatic wonder of the age," the versatile Burke played the violin, sang Irish tunes, led the orchestra in the overture and enacted both comedy and tragedy.

24. There was also a trout named Dolly Varden, olive green with orange or red spots, growing two or three feet long and weighing from five to twelve pounds, native to the streams of the Pacific Northwest of the United States, Canada, and Alaska.

25. Charleston (SC) *Daily Courier*, September 14, 1872.

26. Savannah (GA) *Morning News*, September 18, 1872.

27. Savannah (GA) *Morning News*, September 19, 1872.

28. Undated item from the *Thomasville Times*, repeated in the *Savannah (GA) Morning News*, November 12, 1872.

29. Atlanta (GA) *Constitution*, October 6, 1872.

30. Atlanta (GA) *Sun*, October 6, 1872.

31. Mobile (Ala.) *Daily Register*, October 22, 23, 1872.

32. C. G. Sturtevant, *The White Tops*, January, 1929; Hall, *Billboard*, June 24, 1922; Durand, *Great Eastern Advance Herald*, 1873.

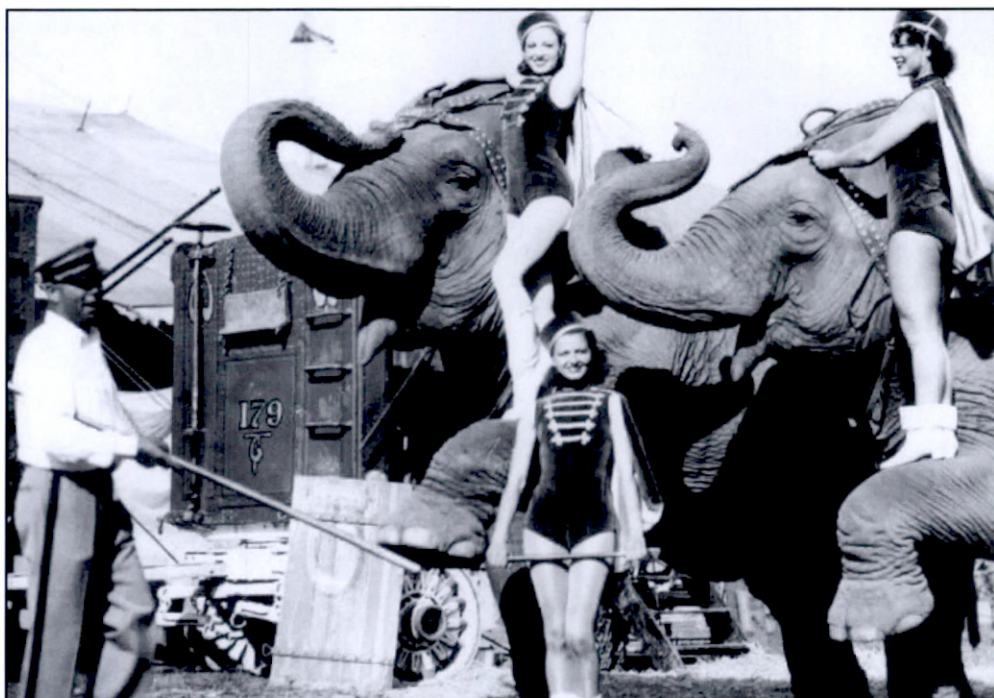
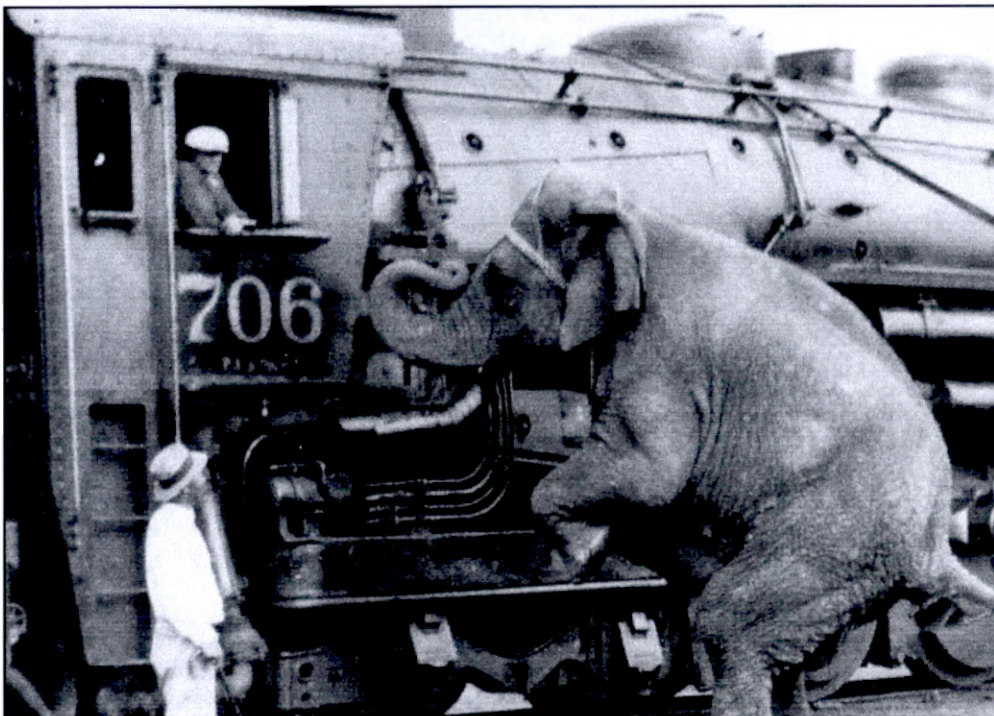
Bill Woodcock's Circus Album

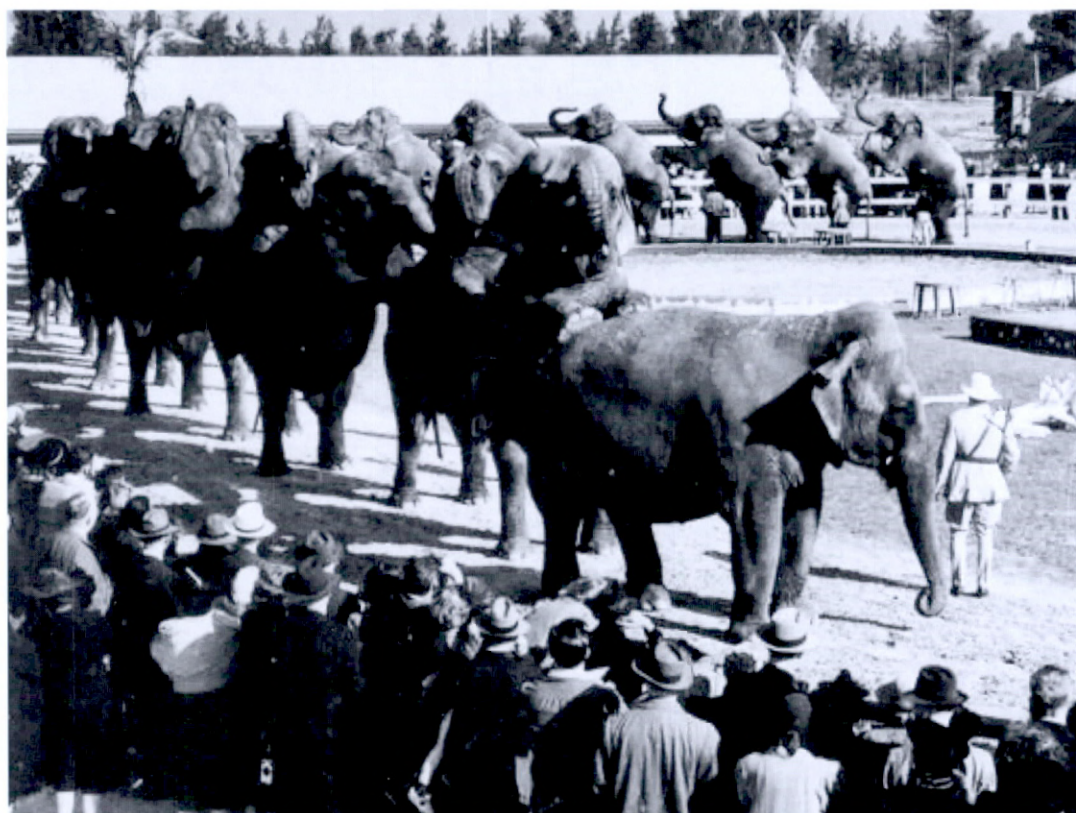
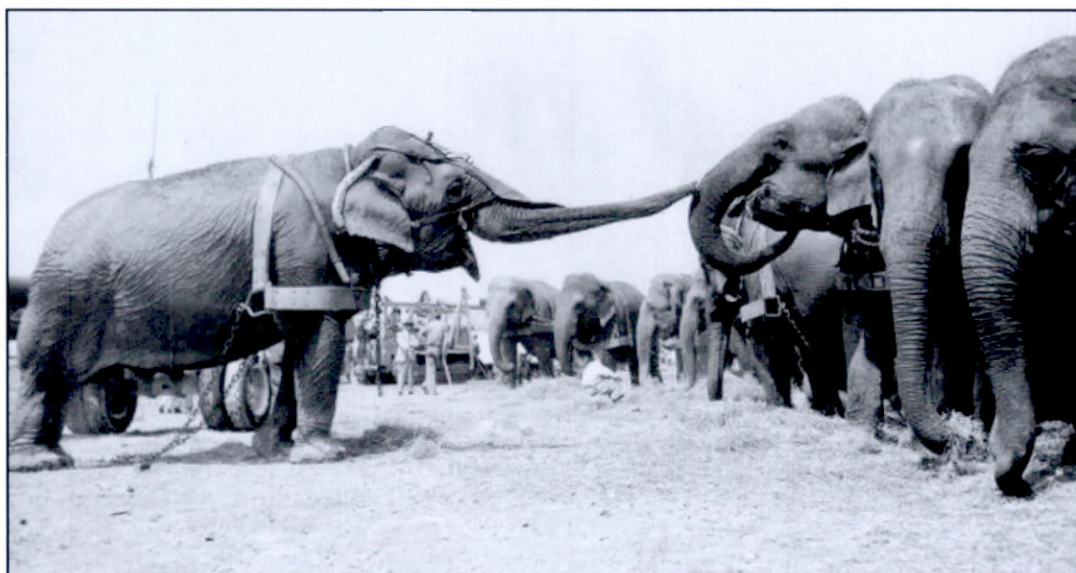
My dad always said that Walter McClain was the best elephant man the Ringling show ever had. George Denman was the best department head, Hugo Schmidt the best trainer, but McClain could do it all. He was only with three circuses in his entire career, starting with the Sparks show (I believe he hailed from Macon, Georgia, that show's winter quarters) and was working on elephants by 1917. Like my dad, he was lucky to learn from one of the top trainers of the day; my dad with Cheerful Gardner and Walter with Louie Reed.

When Reed left Sparks to go with the Sells-Floto Circus in 1924, McClain took over the herd and the first picture shows him with Myrtle on Sparks while he was in charge of the elephants.

McClain has the distinction of having never been fired. He remained with the Sparks show until it was taken off the road after the 1931 season, same with the Al G. Barnes show in 1938. He then took over the Ringling herd, and would probably still be with Ringling had it not been for his premature death in 1942.

The second photo shows McClain on the Al G. Barnes Circus in 1932. Now he was in the big time. Since the show was





owned by John Ringling, Walter received national exposure and the added windfall of Hollywood work in the winter while the Barnes elephants appeared in both epic and Tarzan movies.

The next photo is the scene after McClain took over the Ringling elephants. They all worked. As a result of the 1938 teamsters strike, John Ringling North eliminated all the baggage horses and the 100 odd

teamsters who worked them. With the addition of the Barnes elephants in 1939 they not only worked on the lot (notice the push pad on the elephant at left), but loaded and unloaded the train. Many of the Ringling elephants were not broken for harness so McClain put in a busy winter.

Slivers Madison, Walter's first assistant on both the Barnes and Ringling shows, said that it was gen-

eral knowledge that McClain was illiterate, but had no idea that everyone was aware of that fact. Slivers did whatever paperwork was required such as hiring and firing the help, but another of his jobs was to fetch Walter the newspaper and fill him in on current events. Then Walter would enter the elephant men's tent and with a flourish produce his reading glasses. After considerable scanning he would announce that Hitler had invaded Poland and that he was very concerned.

The last of the Walter McClain pictures was taken during rehearsal of the long mount at the Sarasota winter quarters. Slivers Madison was drafted into the Army in 1942 and he told me he was in Basic Training when he learned that Walter had been killed.

Oscar Cristiani was an eyewitness to the incident. He said that John

Ringling North was engaged to one of his sisters at the time, and the three of them were standing at the railroad crossing watching the train being unloaded when the hook rope broke while one of the wagons was coming down the runs. It continued to roll across the intersection. McClain, standing nearby with the elephants, attempted to climb aboard the runaway vehicle to set the hand brake, but instead slipped and fell beneath the wagon to his death.

Side Lights On The Circus Business

PART FORTY SEVEN

By David W. Watt

Editor's note. The dates listed are the dates the article appeared in the Janesville, Wisconsin Daily Gazette.

July 12, 1919

The announcement of the coming of the Walter L. Main show August 16 carried me back more than 30 years when Adam Forepaugh's show and the Main show had opposition in the towns in the east. At that time the great Forepaugh show was as large as any on the road, having sixty-four 70-foot [60-foot] cars back with the show and three advertising cars in advance with 64 men to advertise the show.

The Main show at that time was a small show traveling from town to town by wagon. While it was a high class, clean show and was leaving a good name behind it, the Forepaugh show did not look [favorably] upon it as it meant much in the way of opposition.

At that time the Forepaugh show advertised five or six weeks ahead and the contract agents had already secured the lot, license and billboards before the Main show advertising men arrived in the town. On account of the Main show being a wagon show, it was impossible for them to miss a town--so the contract agent went to work and billed the town to show something like three weeks ahead of the Forepaugh show, and here the work of the contracting agent showed a little strategy.

The best billboard in the town had been engaged by the Forepaugh agent, and when the contracting agent of the Main show looked up the owner (an old German) and found

out that the Forepaugh show gave him a check for \$60 payable at the ticket wagon at 3 p.m. on the day of exhibition, the agent said to the old German: "Let me see your contract." He showed the agent the check given by the Forepaugh agent.

The Main agent said, "You may get your money on the check and you may not." When he measured for the space on the billboard, he said to the old man: "Your space here is worth \$75 and they should have given you that much money instead of the check. We always pay cash to people that we do business with and I will pay you \$75 for the use of this billboard and give you the cash. You certainly have a right to do this for two reasons--first, you may get your money and you may not, and the other is that you have not been given



the amount that the billboard was worth."

The old German tore up the Forepaugh check and took the cash from the agent of the Main show. As the show had their bills and bill posters right there before night, the big billboard was covered for the Main show. When car No. 1 of the Forepaugh show arrived a few days later, they found their best billboard covered and the old German would not allow them to bill their posters as he had already had his cash. For many years back there had been but little of this kind of work done. The Main show made the towns some few weeks ahead of the Forepaugh show, but did not do good business, but always left a good name.

The Walter L. Main show has always been known as an eastern show. The general public in the west knew little of it. They have two rings and a platform which is all that the public can see at one time, and without a question can give a high class show.

The following letter from the Al Barnes show will give the reader an idea of the money Mr. Barnes is spending to build his show up to one of the greatest in the country.

"Al G. Barnes has received a call from his agents stating that the following animals will arrive in San Francisco on June 30. Ten lions, five elephants, six leopards and a dozen small animals, also a number of tropical birds. Mr. Barnes will leave in time to be in Frisco for the arrival of the beasts. These animals are probably the first to reach this country since the beginning of the war.

"Chief Black Hawk and ten Indians joined the show at Helena, Montana. The chief will stage a war dance as a feature in the concert.

"Governor Stewart of Montana entertained Mr. Barnes after the evening performance. Richard Ringling and Mrs. Ringling were guests of the show at Bozeman, Montana.

"In spite of the hot weather and burnt up crops in the Northwest countries, the Barnes show has enjoyed a more prosperous season. Mr. Barnes has bought 500 acres of land near Missoula, Montana and there is talk that the show may winter there next year."

The following letter from the John

Robinson show which is touring Canada tells of the prosperity in that country and the big business they are doing: "The folks with the John Robinson circus are having all kinds of fun boating and fishing in Canada. When showing in Joliet, Quebec, Art Adair bumped his head on a bridge and sustained a slight cut above the left eye. The accident happened while the parade was out. The clown band had started across the bridge and a number of the boys yelled, 'low bridge.' Art was never with a boat show, consequently the bump. Fred Ledgett, the equestrian director, says that whenever the show plays a town with a bridge, he is going to hang a red flag on it. The next stand was Three Rivers, but Abe Johnson, the 'untamable clown,' says he only saw two rivers. Sunday was spent in Quebec and several of the folks made their appearance on the lot in palm beach sunning. However, there was a heavy wind in the afternoon, and in less than an hour, they were wearing overcoats.

"The following stand was Riviere-du-Loup and as it was a long run, the show didn't get in until late. The last wagon was unloaded at 12:15 noon and the performance was started at 3 o'clock, even though it was an uphill haul.

"Only one show was given. The attendance was big. Campbell's Bay followed, and although a small town, it sure was filled with people and they were out to spend their money. All the folks with the show are well and doing fine. Daddy Cammon sends his best regards to friends."

July 19, 1919

Many interesting stories have been told of the two most eccentric characters that I ever knew in the circus business: Adam Forepaugh and his son, the late Adam Forepaugh, Jr.

It was in the early '80's that the late Sam Watson, who for several years had been an European agent during the winter, resigned his position and went back to England, his old home, to organize a small show of his own. It was then that Adam Forepaugh cast around the show for someone to take Watson's place and take his boat for Europe for the closing of the season.

After he had spent much time try-



Al G. Barnes

ing to induce two or three different ones, myself among the rest, to take the trip, but to no avail, he finally sent his son, Adam, Jr. After the young man had spent some weeks in London and Paris and other European cities and spent much money, he thought it a question whether the father would send him any more money unless he could show him that he had found something worthwhile.

It was then that the young man sent the father, a cablegram which read: "I have bought a pair of kangaroos as large as western horses broken to drive in harness, the greatest I have ever seen for parade; price \$5,000. Cable me the money." This the father did and in a few days received another cable saying: "Bought kangaroos yesterday. Died this morning." This was one of the jokes around the show for years, and when anyone would tell a story that looked among the impossibilities, the only answer they would get would be: "Bought them last night. Died this morning."

The young man returned early in the year without securing any attractions for the coming season except a few performers. As I told you before, it was the season of '84 that the small elephant known all over the world as the boxing elephant, John L. Sullivan, was one of the great features of the show. During the summer he was dated for 20 weeks in Europe in the different large cities at

\$1,000 per week. Adam Forepaugh, Jr. and the elephants' boxing partner, Eph Thompson, the colored boy who stood 6 feet 2 inches and weighted 200 pounds, at the close of the show started for Europe. The trio returned in the spring some four weeks before the show was to take the road. The money was all spent in having a good time.

One day when Mr. Forepaugh and I were in the ticket wagon, I said to him: "Governor, the boys must have done pretty well on their trip to Europe."

Looking over his glasses he smiled and said: "Yes, the boys did fine, I guess."

"Well, Governor," said I, "How did you come out?"

"Oh," said he, "I got the elephant and the ring back and that was about all that I expected."

While he was thrifty, not only in money making, he saved every dollar, and yet when it came to spending the money, the young man seemed to have his own way.

The following letter from Thomas A. Milner, one of the circus boys who certainly did "his bit" in the war, will make interesting reading: "A few lines to say I'm still in the land of the living and needless to say, it's a warm one. I was in hopes of returning in time for the summer season, but alas, I am still yearning. However, I hope to be demobilized by the end of July and after a few weeks with the old folks in England, pack my grip for the homeward trip. I have just completed my fourth year of active service of which three years were spent with the 30th field ambulance in Serbia, Macedonia and Palestine. The last six months I've been in a P.O.W. hospital in Egypt.

"I would consider it a great favor if you would convey through your columns my best wishes and many thanks to my numerous friends, especially C. B. Turner who was the first to send me *Billboard*. I received that copy two days after we took Jerusalem, and I think it's safe to say it was the first copy to enter the Holy City, and probably the first American paper during the war.

"Wishing you the best of luck, Yours truly, Corp. Thomas A. Milner."

The following letter to the *Billboard* looks as though the



Letterhead used by the Adam Forepaugh Show in 1884.

European trip of the great Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey show combined would be postponed until another season.

"The Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey show combined did tremendous business in Boston. Bales and bales of straw had to be used to seat the people. Quite a number of the performers visited the Sells-Floto show Saturday, while it was playing at Framingham. The streetcar strike at Lowell did not affect the business to any extent. Two shows were given, the night performance a big turn away. Jitneys, wagons and busses all did big business. Big business also resulted for the show at Lowell, Fitchburg, Worcester and Providence. More straw, boys. Flat Iron Wirth rejoined the show at Boston, an addition to clown alley.

"Buck Baker's flying auto's greatest fault is that it never wants to come down. The Henry got to flying the other night and it took five men to pull it down.

"The All Star Trio, Wilbur Williams, Jay Rab and Ed Norwood, are still grabbing every available space in the dailies. Frank and Mark Hulling are putting on wonderful seal displays this season—four seal acts are working at one time. The two clown seal acts are causing quite a lot of comment. With Alfred Loyall's wonderful canine act in the center ring, this is one of the finest animal numbers ever seen in the big show.

"As far as can be discovered, it seems as though the proposed Ringling invasion of London and Paris next winter will be called off for

a while. It was, it is understood, the intention of the American circus magnates, the Ringling Bros., to bring over their combined show and open on boxing day at the Olympia in London for a while and then play a few weeks in Paris, but from all accounts it appears as if the trip will have to be postponed.

"A victory circus and allied fair will open at the Olympia in December which will include equestrians from the different nations who fought side by side during the war. When the Ringling-Barnum proposition was first suggested to the management of the mammoth London hall, it met with great favor, but subsequently the authorities seemed to feel that the great big winter circus conducted heretofore at the Agricultural Hall on Islington would be transferred this year to the Olympia and that while performers from the allied nations would be welcome, the affair should be strictly of a British character and under local management."

July 26, 1919

Many readers of the *Side Lights* will recollect Annie Oakley, the great rifle shot, who next to Buffalo Bill was the one great feature of the Wild West show at the World's Fair in Chicago in '93 and later in '96 (sic). When Buffalo Bill gave his first performance in Janesville, he drew the largest crowd that ever was seen under a canvas in Janesville. Later Annie Oakley was connected with Miller Brothers' 101 Ranch Wild West [Young Buffalo Wild West], and it was at that time that I visited her in her tent on the show grounds where she had everything as commodious as she could have in a home,

including a large Turkish rug which covered the floor. Miss Oakley will again give exhibitions in fancy rifle shooting and instruct women in the art of marksmanship. Two airplanes are to make daily trips, carrying passengers from Boston to the shooting grounds, a distance of 60 miles.

Arrangements were completed yesterday by Charles L. Hutchinson, vice-president of the South Park commission and treasurer of the soldiers' and sailors' fund and Alderman Joseph P. Kostner, chairman of the soldiers' and sailors' memorial fund, and representatives of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus, whereby the circus is to appear at Grant Park for nine days. The opening performance will be Saturday afternoon, August 9 and two performances each day will be given during the engagement, which will close Sunday night, August 17. The firm received a guarantee of the receipts of the circus.

Circus Folks Dine

The dinner given by the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey combined shows at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania was declared by all present to be the greatest in the history of both the Ringling and Barnum shows. Much credit is due Ollie Webb, a chef who know how to feed. The exterior of the cook house was simply wonderful and the interior was a beautiful sight to behold. The decorations were elaborate and were the work of E. Altoff, Joe Blo, Lew Hicks, Walter Brennen and John Dillon. Joe Kane handled the lighting and Ed Rumley was busy with the lemonade. The ladies were each given an elegant box of chocolates.

Otto Floto, representing the Sells-Floto circus, Wednesday of last week in Cincinnati secured Joe Kearn's signature to a contract calling for the appearance of the world's champion heavyweight boxer Jack Dempsey, with the circus for a limited engagement starting August 4.

Dempsey concluded his engagement at Chester Park, Cincinnati, Saturday night and left for the west, where he will visit his parents and rest up before doing any more show work.

It is Floto's plan to present

Dempsey with a sparring partner, billing the champion as "Jack the Giant Killer," pictured as the conqueror of the three mighty giants, Carl Morris, Fred Fulton and Jess Willard.

Dempsey in Demand

Kearns is fairly besieged with offers for Dempsey, but the latter is said to much prefer fighting, and if the matches can be arranged, it is hardly probable the champion will do much theatrical work.

Announcements were made in eastern papers Sunday of last week to the effect that Dempsey had signed with the circus and would open July 14 in Newark, New Jersey. These announcements were premature, the contract not being signed until Floto reached Cincinnati on Wednesday.

The *Billboard* has received a letter from J. Lamont of Lamont's bird act, dated at Lima, Peru, South America, June 15, telling about the early season of the Santos & Artigas Circus, which is now in South America. The show opened in Colon, Panama, May 19, for a four day's engagement and then jumped to Panama City, Panama, for another four day's stay. From here it moved over the line to Balboa, for a three day's run, then laid over for two days and took a boat for Lima, Peru, the trip consuming the nine days. The circus opened in Lima Saturday, June 14, to a packed house, standing room being at a premium. It was to remain in Lima for four weeks.

Meets H. C. of L.

"The Santos & Artigas circus is a good show," continues Mr. Lamont, "probably the largest that ever toured this part of South America. The interesting part that many might like to know is the living conditions. They are high. A room that you could get in the U.S.A. for \$2.50 a week costs \$3 a day here. The rooms are common, no running water or elevator service. In fact, the hotels are built only about one story high. They have electric lights. If an artist going to South America thinks living is cheap, he or she is badly mistaken.

"They get \$50 more than their regular salary. They should never cut their salary coming into this country.



Jack Dempsey

A meal will cost from \$1 to \$1.50. The expense of two people on the week will run about \$60 by living economically.

"Another thing, you lose lots of time traveling, which makes it bad, as no one receives any salary while traveling. If you travel by boat, of course, you get your living, as that goes on your traveling expense, but if it is by rail, you pay for your own food. It is best for the artists to try to get their expenses paid while laying off and traveling with any show. Then you are safe and that is the way it should be. It is all Spanish speaking, little English, so it makes it bad if you cannot talk the language. It is no place for a talking act, but fine for any dumb acts. The natives are crazy for shows. The movies do a big business. There are about six or eight movie places here. It never rains. The people claim it hasn't rained here in 60 years. In Panama this time of the year, it rains every day and some times three or four times a day. Shows going into Panama have got to hit on pay months. Any English-speaking show can get along in Panama, but the field is small. There are only about three weeks that a show can stay."

August 2, 1919

For several weeks back, Mrs. W. F. Cody, wife of the late Buffalo Bill, has been writing interesting stories in the *Ladies Home Journal*, telling

mostly of the early life of herself and her famous husband. While I have known Mrs. Cody for many years, the last visit I had with her was some years ago when Buffalo Bill and Major Lillie showed in Janesville. At that time I was a witness to a deed which they had secured to a piece of property in their hometown, Cody, Wyoming.

Aside from Buffalo Bill there was only one man that I ever knew that was as good at breaking glass balls and throwing them in the air and that was Doctor Carver, who for two years was one of the big features with the Adam Forepaugh show. After the dosing of the Forepaugh show at Altoona, Pennsylvania in 1886, Doctor Carver left immediately for Europe where he toured the country single-handed, giving exhibitions for two or three years, after which he returned to this country, being one of the big features at different fairs with his diving horses and seals, which would climb up an incline 80 feet high and dive off into a large tank of water. It was not so long after this that this kind of entertainment failed to please the people and Doctor Carver went back into a small Wild West show which, so far as I know, is still touring the country.

Mrs. Cody, in an early day, spent some years on the frontier with her famous husband up to the time he started a Wild West show on a large scale. In the winter of 1887 Adam Forepaugh featured Buffalo Bill's Wild West show for four months in Madison Square Garden, New York. Upon opening there with his circus for the coming season and since the retirement of Major Lillie from the Wild West show business and the death of the late Buffalo Bill, this marked the passing of the once great Wild West show which toured every civilized country in Europe for some years, as well as in the United States.

Visit "Yank" Robinson Grave

Every time a circus plays Jefferson, Iowa, it is always made a point to visit the grave of the once-famous showman, Fayette L. or "Yankee" Robinson. A week or so ago the Yankee Robinson Circus appeared there and owner Fred Buchanan and a number of others



Doctor W. F. Carver

with the show, including the band, visited the burying place and decorated the grave with flowers as the band played an appropriate selection. Marking the grave is a monument bearing the inscription: "Fayette L. Robinson, Born May 2, 1818; died September 4, 1884. Erected by Sells Bros. Show and the Ringling Brothers, 1890." On the base of the monument appears this "Yankee Robinson."

Barnes Near Chicago

Chicago circus fans will have a good opportunity to see the Al G. Barnes Wild Animal circus at Evanston, Illinois August 1; Elgin, August 2 and DeKalb, August 4. The show will not appear nearer to the Windy City than at the above-mentioned towns. Elgin has had no circus or carnival this season, and everybody in the town expects to see what kind of an exhibition Mr. Barnes has to offer, it being the first appearance of Mr. Barnes show at Elgin. All the factories will close at noon.

Takes Me Back to 1879

The following letter from the Sells-Floto show at Liberty, New York,

takes me back to 1879 with Burr Robbins show when we arrived in Blue Island, Illinois Sunday morning and we prepared to show there Monday afternoon and evening. The parade was out on time Monday morning and I am not exaggerating when I say that there were not 75 people on the streets to witness the parade. When the wagon was opened at 1 o'clock there were just six people waiting to buy tickets. It was nearly 1:30 when the crowd commenced to come and by the time the grand entry was started at 2 o'clock, there was not a vacant seat under the canvas and many were standing up, but such conditions as these were seldom

A Sells-Floto Circus parade in 1919.



seen in the circus business.

Sells-Floto Circus

"Isn't it funny when you arrive a little late and there's no one down to see you arrive, and when you get up town by walking, you wake up the traffic policeman, and you are informed that the only restaurant in town is run by the hotel and dinner will be ready at noon and you finally find a little place where you get coffee and rolls, and then when you reach the lot away out of town and no one on the way out is taking an interest in your arrival and you find no one on the lot and you decide that a parade is not necessary and about 2:15 the whistle blows and you peek into the big top and find every seat taken and people sitting on the shavings and straw? Ain't it funny where they come from? The above happened at Liberty, New York. The writer will repeat that Sells-Floto has certainly received its share of the business this year's show, as it is, in new territory. The management is to be congratulated. Oh, well, it's a good show, so why not?"

"The past few days have brought out quite a number of visitors. George Cole and Harold were over at Newark, Spader Johnson was at Scranton, Pennsylvania. Others were Kid Kannard, George Potter of the Potter family, and Frank S. John, formerly equestrian director of the Coop & Lent and Jones Bros. & Wilson shows. The latter is now settled down at Kingston, New York and says never again. But who can tell?"

Business is Good

Business to date has been good [for Ringling-Barnum] in spite of the fact that late arrivals and late shows make bad business, but now that the show is out of the mountains and headed toward Michigan, it ought to be on time henceforth.

The severe wind and electrical storm which swept eastern Ohio the night of July 14, caught the Ringling Bros. & Barnum show just as workmen were preparing to lower the big top at Akron, Ohio. So suddenly did the

storm strike, it was impossible to haul down the canvas, and as a result, it became water-soaked and sagged and the weight snapped off two of the center poles, badly damaging one section of the top, together with a part of the lighting system. The accident delayed departure from the Rubber City and as a result, the show was late in reaching Canton, Ohio, the next stand. However, a one o'clock parade was given and a four o'clock matinee played to big business. The night performance was witnessed by a capacity audience. The show played on the Stark County Fairgrounds in Canton, one of the finest circus lots in the country.

Since July 1 the clowns of the Ringling and Barnum & Bailey show have been kept busy framing new clown numbers regarding prohibition. Those who put on some funny stuff are Tom and Everett Hart, Jerry Alton, George Hartzell, Walter and Paul Jung, Buster Marsh, Paul Jerome, Herman Joseph, Frank Hammer, Pat Valdo, Joe Short, Lester Tucker, The Casinos, Billy Roscoe, Jack Hedder, Jim Spriggs, Al Miaco, Eddie Nemo, Mickey McDonald, George Zammert, Jake Kogan, Harry Clemings, Charles Smith, Herman Poline, Flat Iron, Al Sylvester and Billy Rice.

August 9, 1919

On Friday evening of last week, two advance advertising cars were sidetracked in the St. Paul yards at the same time. One was No. 1, which is known as the first advance car with the manager and twenty bill posters and belonged to the Ringling and Barnum show. They were on their way to Madison and only stopped over in Janesville long enough to be transferred from one train to another. The other was No. 1 advertising car of the Walter L. Main show. They were on their way to Beloit, where they show Saturday of next week. This car stayed overnight in Janesville and was not taken over to Beloit until 11:15 the next day. I was shown all through the car which was one of the most complete and best arranged cars that I have ever

seen.

The manager had a state room and a private office, a dining room and a kitchen in the care of a high class chef. The bill posters, 14 in number, all had comfortable quarters, and the manager told me that at times they carry as high as 25 tons of paper. If the routes out of the towns in which they were to show were long ones, the manager, the night before would give orders to the chef to have breakfast at 5 o'clock sharp and before 6 o'clock all the bill posters on the country routes were on their way. Many times everything would be done by 3 or 4 o'clock in the afternoon and the car ready for the next town. All of these advance cars carry from 30 to 40 days' paper for the billboards in case of a strike or a tie-up of any kind on the railroads. With the great Ringling and Barnum show they have three advance cars each carrying from 20 to 25 men and many tons of paper. All of their advertising routes are always gone over three times in case of accidents of any kind, or heavy rains or blow-downs of any kind. The No. 3 advertising car is the last one to look everything over before the coming of the show.



The No. 3 Ringling-Barnum advance car.

As a rule, the newspapermen of the show for the most part travel on either of these cars, and every few days will drop back to the show many times for new orders or to consult with the Ringlings or with their manager.

But all this is vastly different from what it was my first year in the business in '78, when George K. Steele, the advance agent who drove over the country with a single horse and top buggy and covered wagons filled with advertising paper, drawn by two

horses and two bill posters, made up the entire advance of the show. Burr Robbins limited Mr. Steele to \$30 for the erection of a billboard in any town and very often it would not amount to half that. In many of the western towns, there were no billboards, no lots and no licenses. Barns, if there were any, were covered with bills announcing the coming of the show, and all along the road they would leave bills at the farm houses. Many times the show would take in more than \$2,000 in one day, with the local expense less than \$100. But those were primitive days when Kansas and Nebraska were wild, with but few towns, and these many miles apart. In '78 the Burr Robbins show, which was a wagon show drawn over the road by a hundred and forty horses, never missed a stand and only one day that we got in so late it was impossible to give but one show.

With the Adam Forepaugh show every contract was made before the show with the three different advertising cars. Everything had to be sent back to me and I had to take time to look over every contract and see if there was anything out of the ordinary that would need looking after on the arrival of the show. With the big envelopes of contracts to be looked over every day, the selling of the tickets, the paying of the bills and two salary days every week, and with but one man to do it all, it was certainly a work house from early in the morning until late at night.

The great Ringling and Barnum combined shows opened today on the lake front in Chicago, where they will remain nine days. This is probably the first show to open under canvas on the Lake Front for many years. They contribute five percent of the gross receipts to different charities in Chicago. This is to be looked after by different committees in the city.

August 16, 1919

Saturday last the great Ringling and Barnum & Bailey shows combined opened in Chicago on the lake front for a run of nine days. Without

question, it will take in more money than any circus every took in the same length of time under canvas. For the privilege of showing on Grant Park, they give five percent of the gross receipts, and the different charities which it will go to figure that it will enrich them from \$12,000 to \$15,000.

Tuesday last I was in Chicago and while there I met a few old friends and took a look at the acres of canvas which they told me covered 14 acres of land. I did not question it as it was a much larger spread of canvas than I had ever seen before. They told me that the receipts so far had gone away ahead of their expectations.

After the close of their engagement in Chicago, they will come west, taking in Rockford, Madison and so on to the far west. Whether we will be in line to get them on the return trip is still a question. The show is so much larger this season and the expense so much greater that they are passing up many of the smaller towns which they took in years ago when they were divided. While I know nothing of their plans for the winter, it looks reasonable that they may conclude to winter in their old quarters at Baraboo.

Fame Spreads

A few days ago a returned soldier from overseas came to me and said: "Mr. Watt, your Side Lights on the Circus are certainly taking in some territory, as only a few weeks ago while in a theater in Paris a friend of mine said, 'The stage manager would like to see you back in the dressing room. He has something from home that he would like to show you.'"

"There pinned up on the wall was one of your Side Lights on the Circus which had found its way to Paris. It was the one where you told of the death of Adam Forepaugh, Jr. The manager, who was a man well along in years told me that in 1888 and 1889, he traveled with the Forepaugh show.

"For two years, Mr. Watt paid me off every Wednesday," he said. "My trunk in the dressing room was next to that of young Forepaugh who, at that time, was the equestrian director of the show."

The young soldier's name is Will Deneen. His home is on St. Mary's

Avenue. He has lived in Janesville all of his life.

Young Deneen said while he had spent much time the last few weeks in Paris, it certainly did him good to read my articles in the Janesville Daily Gazette away overseas.

Predicts Bumper Year

So far as I can hear, this is going to be a "bumper" season for all of the shows. The following letter is from the Hagenbeck-Wallace shows.

"The slogan nowadays is: Cactus, sagebrush, coyotes, sand, rattlesnakes, mountains and long

first, second and third sections were loaded and on their way to Billings, Montana. You've got to hand it to Trainmaster Brown. He knows how to 'rawhide' em.

To Scale Wall

"The human spider, Roscoe Goodwin, of clown alley, is preparing to scale the side of a large skyscraper in Spokane, Washington. No one discovered that Bessie Hill was a Colorado girl until the show had left the state. Richard Ringling, with a good coat of tan, dropped in to see the circus at Fort Collins, Colorado near

his ranch, accompanied by his wife and son. 'Red' Bartlett and Crazy Ray created a near panic on the streets of Casper, Wyoming Saturday night, the latter wearing a dangerous looking red cravat and the former a cutaway frock, a la Max Marx, which made the ranchers feel hilarious.

"The western denizens take the circus seriously. In most of the 'hick' towns a half holiday is universally pro-

claimed. Not even a shave can be procured. The restaurants and police station automatically close. In Wheatland the passenger agent of the railroad hid away to the circus and when the 5:15 pulled out, the sign read: 'Gone to the circus. Pay your fare to the conductor.'" Dixon Van Valkenberg.

Jack Dempsey, the new champion heavyweight, by written agreement opened with the Sells-Floto circus at Grand Rapids, Michigan August 9. He played one full week; the towns in which he was seen with the show include besides Grand Rapids, Traverse City, Cadillac and Kalamazoo, Michigan and Gary, Indiana.

From good authority, it is learned

Port Arthur, Texas. Tuesday-OCT-21-19

THIS IS THE BIG ONE—
PORT ARTHUR, TUESDAY, OCT. 21

SUPER FEATURE

JACK DEMPSEY
THE GIANT-KILLER (HIMSELF)

REPRODUCING
THE
WORLD'S CHAMPION
DEMPSEY-WILLARD CONTEST
ROUND for ROUND

SELLS-FLOTO
CIRCUS

TWICE DAILY-2:15 & 8:15 P.M.
NO EXTRA CHARGE

A 1919 Sells-Floto Circus newspaper ad featuring Jack Dempsey.

jumps. Arthur Borella says Horace Greeley was all wrong about advising the younger generation to go west. Art said he meant West Baden. Bert Cole says he does not want to go any further west than New York City.

"Despite the pessimistic optimism of the western trip, business through the mountain district of Colorado and Wyoming was to capacity. The first stand in Wyoming was Wheatland, matinee performance only, at advanced prices, with the temperature 110, to capacity. Thermopolis, the first Sunday engagement, brought in the ranchers in droves. At 8 o'clock that night the

that Dempsey may travel with Sells-Floto all of next season.

August 23, 1919

On Saturday last I took an early car for Beloit to take a look at the Walter L. Main show and to have a visit with old friends, if there happened to be any. As soon as I arrived on the grounds a man who had tipped the scales at at least 250 pounds grabbed me by the hand and said, "Dave, I have wondered for years if we would meet again." As I had not seen him since 1888, and as he was but 19 years of age at that time and possibly weighed but little, if any more than half of what he does now, was it any wonder that I could not place him?

"Why," said he, "I am none other than the 'Barnum Kid.'" He came to the Forepaugh show in '88 and was given work in a side show and in the evening, while loading the train and everybody was standing around eating sandwiches and drinking coffee, the "Barnum Kid" stood back of me looking, as I thought, wistfully at the lunch stand. I invited him to have lunch with me. After lunch I asked the "Kid" if he was broke, and he said he was, so I handed him \$2 that he might have carfare, at least until salary day. His name is John L. Fehr, but he was never known by any other name than that of the "Barnum Kid" around the Forepaugh show. He told me that he had followed the business continuously since '88 and he is now manager of the Main show. I met several other old friends, including Orrin Hollis, his sons and daughter, all of whom are high class riders and late in the '80's were connected with the Forepaugh show.

Back from War

Saturday afternoon last, Sgt. Frank Potter, Baraboo, arrived in Janesville on the 5 o'clock interurban, having just received his discharge at Camp Grant and was on his way home. He had been overseas for a year and a half, and for eight or nine years before he enlisted, he was assistant treasurer of the Ringling show, with Tom Buckley, who had been the treasurer for more than 20 years. Frank told me of reading the Gazette in Paris and my account of the death of Adam Forepaugh, Jr.,

whom he knew well. That was the first news he had of his death.

Buried in Circus "Rest"

Out of 148 persons killed and injured in the Hagenbeck-Wallace circus wreck last year, 56 performers and attaches of the show were buried in the "Rest" of the Showmen's League of America. Only six performers with the show were insured. Last week the claims of Arthur Diericks, \$300; Joseph Diericks, \$100; Zeb Cattanach, \$500; Bessie Cattanach, \$550; Jennie Todd, \$600; Mary Louise Cottrell, \$1,350, were paid by the North American Accident Insurance Company, Rookery Building, Chicago.

It was Charles G. Kilpatrick, the famous one-legged showman, who made it possible to put through the \$5 and \$20 policies in the North American Accident Insurance Company that would protect the show folks on their circus and carnival trains and protect a performer in the ring and on the stage from a fracture or a break, with their limited and reasonable policies, all over the world.

Parades in Loop

Chicago, Aug. 11--For the first time in 20 years Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus gave a street parade in the loop district today. A crowd estimated at 300,000 viewed the parade, all other traffic in the downtown section being at a standstill in the meantime. This is the first time Ringling Brothers have ever showed on the Chicago lake front.

Killed by Lightning

Charles Moshler, aged 44, an employee in the ticket department of the Ringling Bros. circus for the past 20 years, was struck by lightning during a storm at Fort Wayne, Indiana recently and killed instantly. Moshler was popular and his death was a blow to the entire circus. His body was shipped to Baraboo, where it was cremated and the ashes sent to his home at Oakland, California.

Wind Storm Encountered

A heavy windstorm was encountered by the Cole Bros. shows at Brandenburg, Sask., Canada Monday, July 28. The band had just played for the opening of the night performance when the storm made its appearance. The big top, pit show and kid show all went down and six cages of animals were turned completely over, but luckily none escaped. Mrs. H. L. Morris was caught under the kid show top and bruised but not seriously. Fortunately no one else was hurt.

August 30, 1919

So many times for years back young men have said to me, "Mr. Watt, it has been the ambition of my life to put in at least one season with one of the big shows, one like the great Forepaugh show that you were with so many years or the great Ringling and Barnum & Bailey, the kind that would naturally open in Madison Square Garden, New York in the early spring and practically go from California to Maine during the season." What an opportunity it would be for a young man to see the country.

This idea has been in the minds of thousands of young men the country over and this idea would be all right until the novelty wore off. Then it would be real work for the young men, for there are no easy places around the circus. Every spring in the different departments for weeks after the opening you see the bosses of these departments going through the circus looking for what was known in the business as the "tenderfoot" men, meaning the new ones that had joined out, all anxious to hear the band play and take a peek at the show but when the work that these men had to do was all finished, the bosses wanted these men to get what sleep they could while the show was going on for, in many cases, especially those that were teamsters or canvas men or property men, they had to work late into the night and be up at the break of day in the morning.



New Ones Didn't Sleep

It was always the new men that did not get the required rest that they were looking for and driving them out of the circus tent so that they might get two or three hours' sleep in the afternoon. It was the old-timers in the business that you could always find catching a little sleep in the afternoon that they might get rested for an all night's work in case of a storm or a long haul from the lot to the loading place.

For the last two or three seasons this has been the case with the great Ringling and Barnum shows. On account of the size of the shows they have only taken the larger cities, which means long hauls to the show grounds, shortage of help and in many cases unable to put up the menagerie top in the afternoon or even give the street parade. It is fair to say that under these conditions the "tenderfoot" who is anxious to make one season with the circus in order to see the country only lasts until the first payday.

In my time in the business, the first and second paydays were the hardest of all for there would be anywhere from a dozen to 40 of the newcomers that had already had enough of the sightseeing and were ready to take the first week's salary and hike for home.

Lots of New Ones on Job

In 1884 the Forepaugh show opened for a two weeks' run in Philadelphia. This was one of the hard seasons for me for there were more than the usual allotment of new men joined out and the first two or three paydays it was safe to say that 90 percent of them had to be paid off and new ones hired in their places which all made extra work for the man in the ticket wagon.

Before leaving Philadelphia for the one-day stands, I had a big surplus of silver on hand and one morning took \$10,000 in silver down to the bank in Philadelphia. When I asked the cashier for New York exchange he said, "Nothing doing." I told him I wanted to get rid of the extra weight and yet I wanted money to take with me in case of an accident. Mr. Forepaugh always wanted plenty of money in the ticket wagon. He would not give me large bills or accommo-

date me in any way, and as I did not want to take the money back, I deposited it to Adam Forepaugh's credit. He could not refuse to take it, but the next day sent me a ticket saying that my money was several dollars short. When I went to interview them at the bank, they had weighed the money up and found that the \$10,000 was short in weight when the count was correct. I showed the letter to Mr. Forepaugh and he immediately said, "That's nothing to me. I shall hold you for the \$10,000 and you must settle that with the bank."

I said to Mr. Forepaugh, "I can't weigh the money when I take it in and the banks have never refused to take it before, dollar for dollar." I explained the treatment that I had at the bank and he immediately drove to the bank and drew out his balance which amounted to nearly \$4,000, and said, "Gentlemen, this is the last transaction I shall ever make in your bank."

Tried to Get Him Back

The bank held a directors' meeting and brought all the influence possible on the old showman to get him back where he had done business for so many years, but all to no avail. It was seldom that his balance for years

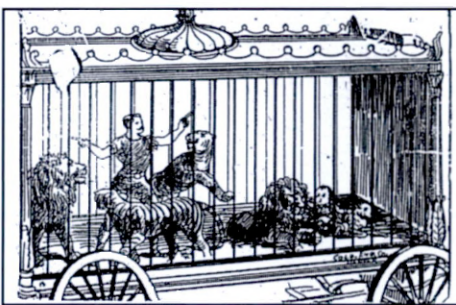
sibly make would be to go over some of the old routes of the show and spend a day visiting with landlords of hotels, owners of lots and bankers that I had done business with for years.

The labor problem with the circus has been the hardest problem to solve of any for the last three years. "The task of conducting a circus of the vast proportions of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey shows combined is largely a problem of labor," said one of the Ringling brothers recently while discussing the various difficulties incidental to moving the big amusement enterprise. "The circus manager must maintain the best of working relations with his men, giving close attention to both their bodily and mental welfare. The accommodations must be the best or the efficiency of the forces will decrease. The employer who trips or fool his men will find that their work will decrease 25 percent in a month, and by the end of the second month, he will find himself with only a remnant of his crew. To prevent this occurrence we feed our workmen three square meals a day. Our commissary has instructions to study the men and learn what they like best to eat. We buy what they like and plenty of it."

Take Physician Along

"We carry a physician and surgeon who attend to their ills, though, since the men work almost entirely in the open air, they have little need for medicine. We encourage sports. Our laboring ranks this season number three baseball nines, a bowling team, tennis players and quite a few clever wrestlers and fencers. We also have several bands and orchestras besides those which appear in parade or on the main tent program."

"And let it be distinctly understood that every man traveling with our circus has a sleeping berth on our trains. I know there is a popular belief that the circus laborer bunks on the top of wagons and goodness knows where. That's pure bosh. I sometimes think that this impression is due to the fact that scores of the laboring men are seen fully dressed and perched on the tops of



back had run below a quarter of a million, and all these years he had never received a penny of interest. How long the cashier lasted, I don't know, but I never had to come in contact with him again in a business way. In all my years in the business, this was the only bank that I ever had any misunderstanding with, and while I could not always get New York or Chicago exchanges for silver, they were always courteous and glad to have me call on them for a few minutes' visit. I have often thought since out of the business, that one of the pleasantest trips that I could pos-

vans, etc. when the circus trains arrive in the railroad yards. But it should be remembered that these men are required for instant work the moment the trains come to a standstill and in view of this have been roused by their respective bosses from their quarters a full half-hour before.

"To suppose that they hadn't been in a teal bed would be similar to arguing that the passengers on a crack Pullman flyer had sat up all night merely because they are ready to be handed down by the car porter when their train arrives at a station.

"If the circus laborer is at times carelessly dressed, it doesn't follow that he has no other wardrobe. Bear in mind that the great majority of people who travel on trains wear their best big and tucker.

September 6, 1919

On Monday last I met an old friend whom I had not seen for 32 years. He knew me in a minute and after shaking hands, I told him I could not place him.

"Well," said he, "I need placing by someone and I thought perhaps that you might help me out. I have been a tramp for more than thirty years. Thirty-two years ago you paid me off every Wednesday during the season of 1887 with the Adam Forepaugh show.

"Dave," said he, "don't you remember Chris Cornell of the Cornell Bros. athletes with the show at that time?"

Cornell at that time weighed less than 150 pounds and now weighs 210, so it was no wonder that I could not place him. Chris went on and related some interesting stories of the experience in the last 32 years. From the Forepaugh show he and his partner went to the O'Brien show where they remained for two years and then joined the John B. Doris show. During this time they had saved a little money and the following spring started out a small show of their own, in hopes as he said, that someday they would be a Barnum or a Forepaugh. But bad weather and other misfortunes overtook them and they were soon back working on a salary again.

Stuck to Show Business

During the last 30 years he has

been connected with different enterprises and has always stuck to the show business. He is here this week as publicity man for Lieut. Ralph C. Diggins, the aviator at the fairgrounds. I had a visit with Lieutenant Diggins who, by the way, was overseas something like a year as one of Uncle Sam's successful aviators. While Lieutenant Diggins makes Chicago his home, he was raised in Harvard, Illinois where his widowed mother still resides. The lieutenant is a ready talker and relates many intertwined stories of his life in the air. His wife, Mrs. Diggins, is always his constant companion and always accompanies her husband from town to town. They have a daughter 13 years of age, who is in a boarding school. The lieutenant and his wife will fly from here to Bloomington, Illinois where they have an engagement of three days the last of next week.

While I was invited to take a trip in the air with the lieutenant, I simply shook my head and said "The ground trips are good enough for me."

So it is when anything out of the ordinary is going on in Janesville, it is almost certain that some old-timer that I have traveled with years ago shows up and we have a long and interesting talk of years ago in the business.

"Prof." Macart Dies

"Prof." Fred Macart who was the first man to do the triple jump over the elephants in the old days when P. T. Barnum was the circus business in this country, died recently at his home, 5532 Santa Monica Boulevard. He was 70 years of age and leaves a widow who, under the name of "the woman with the iron jaw," used to send thrills through the circus-going crowds of the old days by her ridge-pole ride down a taut wire with her teeth in a vise-like grip on a bit of leather attached to a pulley.

Born in London, a scion of the Macart-Genet (?) family, which for 300 years practically controlled the

wild animal business of Europe, "Prof." Macart turned to the circus business naturally. For years he was one of the best known animal trainers in the world. While still a youth, he came to this country to take charge of the wild animal department of the Barnum aggregation. He remained with the great "P. T." for 25 years. He retired ten years ago and went to Los Angeles. The body was shipped to Chicago for burial.

Is Valet to Lion

The occupation of being a barber and having nothing for patrons but lions doesn't sound like a particularly safe one, especially for a man more than 60 years of age, but there is such a man with the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey show com-

combined. He does nothing else but serve as valet for the 22 big lions and lionesses and three tiny lion cubs in the menagerie.

Every lion in the great zoo requires a certain amount of

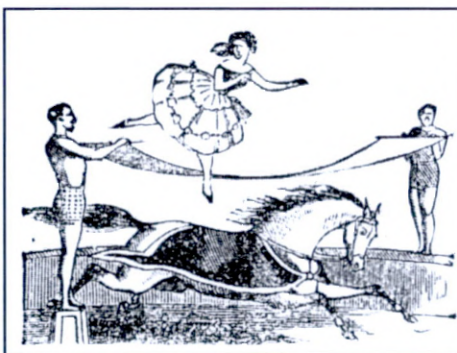
attention every day. At least once a week each must have its nails dipped; otherwise the nails become long, sharp and dangerous.

Manicuring wild animals is like carrying civilization into the jungle, and for the men who do the work, it is almost as exciting as hunting big game.

Animals prefer to keep clean in their own way and even a sedate old lion resents the artificial cleansing processes of civilization.

September 13, 1919

Through my old friend, Chris Cornell last week, I learned for the first time of the death of my old friend, Mike Coyle, which occurred at his home at Weedsport, New York a few weeks ago. Weedsport is a small town about 15 miles from Syracuse. It was there that Mike Coyle had lived for more than half a century. He was about 81 years of age and had spent practically all of his life in show business. Like myself, he commenced in the days of the wagon



show and had filled several responsible positions with practically all the big shows for the past 50 years.

When I joined the Forepaugh show in '82, Mike had charge of advertising car No. 1 with 20 bill posters and was always the first car into a town ahead of the show. His work was always thorough, and his letters back to the show which were always sent to me telling, in detail, the location of the lot, the hotel, the feed man, could always be depended on as absolutely right. Two years later, Adam Forepaugh found it necessary to get a new man to do the railroad contracting ahead of the show.

This position carried with it, not only a large salary, but also the most important of all connected with the show. I mentioned to Mr. Forepaugh that I thought Mike Coyle would make an ideal railroad contractor.

"Well," said the governor, "what makes you think so?"

"For the reason," I said, that he is a tireless worker, conscientious in everything that he does, is well educated and well adapted to meet the businessmen of the different railroads. I don't see how you could possibly find a better man."

He telegraphed ahead for Mike to come back at once, and in less than four days, Mike Coyle was hundreds of miles ahead of the show head over heels in his new work. After the death of Mr. Forepaugh, he was doing railroad contracting for the Buffalo Bill and the Barnum & Bailey shows up until a few years ago when he retired on account of ill health. All the years that I was with the Forepaugh show, when Mike Coyle would come back for a day or two, he would always slip into the ticket wagon first for a word of caution of "advance news," as Mike sometimes called it, for if anything had gone wrong, that the governor might think he was responsible for, as Mike used to say, "he wanted to prepare himself for the worst."

But Mike's show days are over and if there is a reward for faithful service, Mike Coyle will be allowed the medal.

Adam Forepaugh in some ways was not an easy taskmaster, and Mike Coyle, as well as myself, as the saying goes, "would occasionally be called on the carpet." There was a

reason for this, for several years, both Mike and I, at different times were sent back or ahead of the show to settle claims of different kinds. Although the settlement looked ever so good to us, it was always up to the governor to expect a little more. If I do say so, I do not know of two men around the show for several years that had the confidence in every way of Adam Forepaugh as did Mike Coyle and myself.

Several years in my time if a fast train came through the town after the show at night, Mr. Forepaugh always told me to lock everything up, hand him the keys and I could be on my way home. It was some four or five years that the last day's work was never settled. The vouchers and money were put in a separate bag for him to look over later at his leisure. While at times we might think he was small in many ways, in big deals, where much money was at stake, he was liberal to a fault.

Chris Cornell told me last week that he, two or three times in his career in business, had saved up a few thousand. Then he would dream how he could start a small show and in a few years grow up to be a Barnum, a Forepaugh or a Ringling. While at two different times he got what he thought was a well organized show for a small one, it was only to be doomed before the end of the season. Now it is a guess without a good prospect as to who will be the next great showman after the passing of the Barnum and Ringling combined shows.

September 20, 1919

Word received the last few days from several of the principal shows tells us that this will be the banner season of all so far as receipts go. To be sure, the expense of running the show in every department this year has been greater than ever before, and not only that, the labor proposition has been even worse with many of them than in any year during the war. Yet people seem to be hungry for the circus and the Ringing and Barnum combined shows have played to capacity ever since leaving Chicago.

They arrived in Kansas City where they gave two performance on

Monday and the people prevailed on them to give a night show Sunday night and two shows on Monday. At each performance thousands were turned away.

The Sells-Floto show which is one of the high class ones of its size, has had a wonderful season. At Bloomington, Illinois, a short time ago, they gave three performances, turning away people at every performance. After the evening show the Elks Lodge gave seventy-five of the people connected with the show a banquet at their hall which only had to close on account of the trains leaving to the next town.

So it has been with the John Robinson show, and several of the small ones have been playing to capacity the entire season.



Robert Pinkerton.

To be sure in many of the shows their seating capacity is limited to what it was thirty years ago when there were no less than eight big shows on the road and all doing a prosperous business.

Looking back to some thirty-five years ago at incidents that happened in the business, my friend Chris Cornell, who was here during the fair week, called to my mind one which I had long since forgotten. That was when we were showing in Madison Square Garden, New York, where my office was, and a small one with only two wooden arm chairs and a stool to accommodate visitors.

The only two visitors who were there almost every day were Robert Pinkerton of the Pinkerton Detective Agency, who had charge of the New

York office, and W. W. Cole of the famous circus men who for more than forty years had been known among the circus people as "Silent Billy." He was known in the business as the greatest listener of all the show proprietors; as he said many years ago, he made up his mind that he could learn but little by listening to himself, so he concluded to let others do the talking. Robert Pinkerton was much of the same kind, for he had sat in his office in New York for years and listened to the different stories of criminals whom they had captured from all over the country. On account of this, I took two pieces of paper and printed as best I could in large letters and pasted one on each of the old wooden arm chairs which read "Silent Bob," on one and "Silent Billy." All you could see was a faint smile on his face.

When he came to the office at the same time and Pinkerton laughed and turned to Cole and said: "Billy the next thing we know Dave will have a collar made for us and our names put on them." But this did not bring a word from Silent Billy Cole and all you could see was a faint smile on his face. Those two men would spend hours there in the office the best of friends and, while there visiting, would simply look up occasionally to see that the other was there.

September 27, 1919

A few days ago my wife received a letter from Mrs. Adam Forepaugh, Sr., whose home is at Atlantic City, bearing the sad news of the death of her sister, Mrs. Fred Sutterley, in Hong Kong, China.

Mr. and Mrs. Sutterley left Philadelphia which had always been their home, early in 1894 for China, where Mr. Sutterley went into business. As Mrs. Sutterley was her only sister, the blow was a hard one for Mrs. Forepaugh. Mr. and Mrs. Sutterley, as well as my wife and myself, were the guests of Mrs. Forepaugh at the World's Fair for four weeks. Although we had known them for several years, the four weeks spent at the World's Fair naturally brought us closer together.

In looking back over old days, it brings to mind incidents of old men who had once been prosperous in the

show business, but were down and out. These were the men that Adam Forepaugh always looked after and always found some kind of easy work for them around the show at a living salary. One, in particular, who was there for several years, a kind of assistant manager to Mr. Forepaugh, was Jerry Ferguson, who for several years was half owner and manager of the great Van Amburgh show which in the 70's was one of the big shows of the country.

Egbert Howes, part-owner of Howes' Great London Circus.

Another was Egbert Howes, owner of Howes' Great London show who, up to the time of Adam Forepaugh's death, was a faithful door tender.

A better man could not be found in the business. Yet for both of these old men who had owned shows of their own to be dictated to by others was not always pleasant work for them. Jerry Ferguson very often would override his authority and would be giving orders to different bosses around the show who, as a rule, would always take them kindly, but do as they thought best about carrying them out.

We were showing on the lake front in Chicago for two weeks, and every afternoon and evening were turning away thousands of people. As the thermometer stood between 90 and 100 during the entire engagement, and as I had to sell all of the tickets, it was anything but pleasant work.

One evening a few minutes before 8 o'clock, Adam Forepaugh sent word out to the wagon for me to dose down as there was no standing room inside the show. I closed down the door and sat down on the safe. To tell the truth, I was about all in when Jerry Ferguson came to the side door and said that he had been watching me for some time from out in front.

"I want to say to you that I don't like the way you talk to the people

and rap them over the knuckles yelling at the top of your voice, 'Let go of your money and call for your tickets,' and I don't want to hear you talking that way to the public again," he said.

Mr. Ferguson had no more business to give me orders than a driver or a canvas man, and I was not long in telling him so. All the while he was

talking to me, Mrs. Forepaugh was standing behind him. When I commenced to answer him, she slipped down to the front door and told Mr. Forepaugh to send for Mr. Ferguson and give him strict orders to keep away from the ticket wagon. When Mr. Ferguson appeared at the front door, Mr. Forepaugh gave him strict orders to "never go near that

wagon again," for, said he: "While that man in the ticket wagon is the meanest dispositioned man I ever had around the show, he is good in his business and the only way to handle him is to keep away from him and let him have his own way."

Adam Forepaugh did this so as not to be too harsh on Mr. Ferguson who, he knew, meant well, but had gotten overly officious.

Egbert Howes was altogether different, for he looked after taking the tickets at the main entrance and when his work was done, he would usually take a chair and get around in the shade of the canvas by himself. It was many times that I sympathized with the old man when I looked back on their careers when they were both prosperous and owned their own shows.

Word from all the different shows that are out this season is that it has been a banner year for all of them. The report is that the Ringlings may put out the Forepaugh and Sells show in addition to the great Ringling and Barnum & Bailey shows combined. This report has not been confirmed.



The 20th CENTURY WONDER SHOW

ALMOST A
HALF CENTURY
OF
UNSULLIED
REPUTATION

A MIGHTY
ACHIEVEMENT
in
CLEAN
AMUSEMENT

SPARKS CIRCUS

THIS SEASON AUGMENTED
BY THE
WORLD'S FINEST DISPLAY OF
TRAINED WILD BEASTS



20 CITY BLOCKS
OF GORGEOUS
STREET PARADE
AT
10:30 A.M. DAILY
A VISION OF
BEAUTY and SPLENDOR

WATERPROOF TENTS and
COMFORTABLE SEATS FOR
5000 PEOPLE

TWO
PERFORMANCES
DAILY
AT
2 and 8 P.M.

DOORS OPEN
FOR
RECEPTION
OF
PUBLIC IN
MENAGERIE DEPT.
ONE HOUR
EARLIER

Sparks Circus
Menagerie Dept.